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Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

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Robert VanderVennen

BELLEVILLE, Ont. — From their reserves in northern Ontario, 13 teenaged Native students have come to Belleville for Christian education at Quinte Christian High School.

The small school was expecting to have 130 students this year and was at first reluctant to accept these students when they applied at the last minute, admits principal Mike Hoyer. The school has always declined to admit students who will be a great distance from their families, such as overseas students. And some quick additions to the school's academic program were needed.

The connection between the Native students and the school is Native evangelist Ross Maracle. Maracle is head of the Native Bible College in Deseronto, some 50 km. east of Belleville. His daughter is a graduate of Quinte and his son is now a student there. Maracle has done evangelistic work at the two reserves where the students live, with striking success. Three Native couples from those reserves are now students at the Bible college.

From this came the idea that their high-school-aged sons and daughters could also move south, live with their parents and commute to Quinte. Some of their friends from Christian families decided to come with them. They now live during the school year with Christian families in Belleville.

The alternative is for the Native young people to attend high school in

places like Timmins and North Bay. But the support system for them is not very strong and many drop out.

Learning on both sides

Hoyer says that the students' coming is exciting for Quinte Christian High. They are relating well with the other students and are getting along well academically. Quinte's local students have accepted the northerners very well, reports Hoyer.

All but two of the new students are in Grade 9. Each of the other two are in Grade 10 and Grade 11, respectively. Some have tried the high school in Timmins but dropped out. They are receiving a general level program tailored to their needs and background, with special emphasis on language skills.

The Native students are very positive about the school and see it as a way of realizing their aspirations. "I enjoy the academics here," Shane Semple is quoted as saying. "I feel I'm learning a lot more and am getting better marks than at my other school." Shane is a Grade 9 student who dropped out of high school in Timmins midway through his first year. The Natives like the small size of the school and its Christian atmosphere.

Eleven of the 13 students are Cree, from the Kashechewan Reserve on the James Bay north of Moosonee. The other two are Ojibways from the Kasabonika Reserve some 500 km. northeast of Kashechewan. The government pays for their high school

Native students thrive at Ontario Christian high school



Photo: Henry Bury, Belleville Intelligencer

Cree and Ojibway students find new motivation at Quinte Christian High School.

tuition as there are no high schools on the reserves.

The students arrived during the Oka crisis, which added a new dimension to

the way the school community thought about that issue and related Native concerns, says Hoyer.

Christian Churches in Canada take united stand against Gulf war

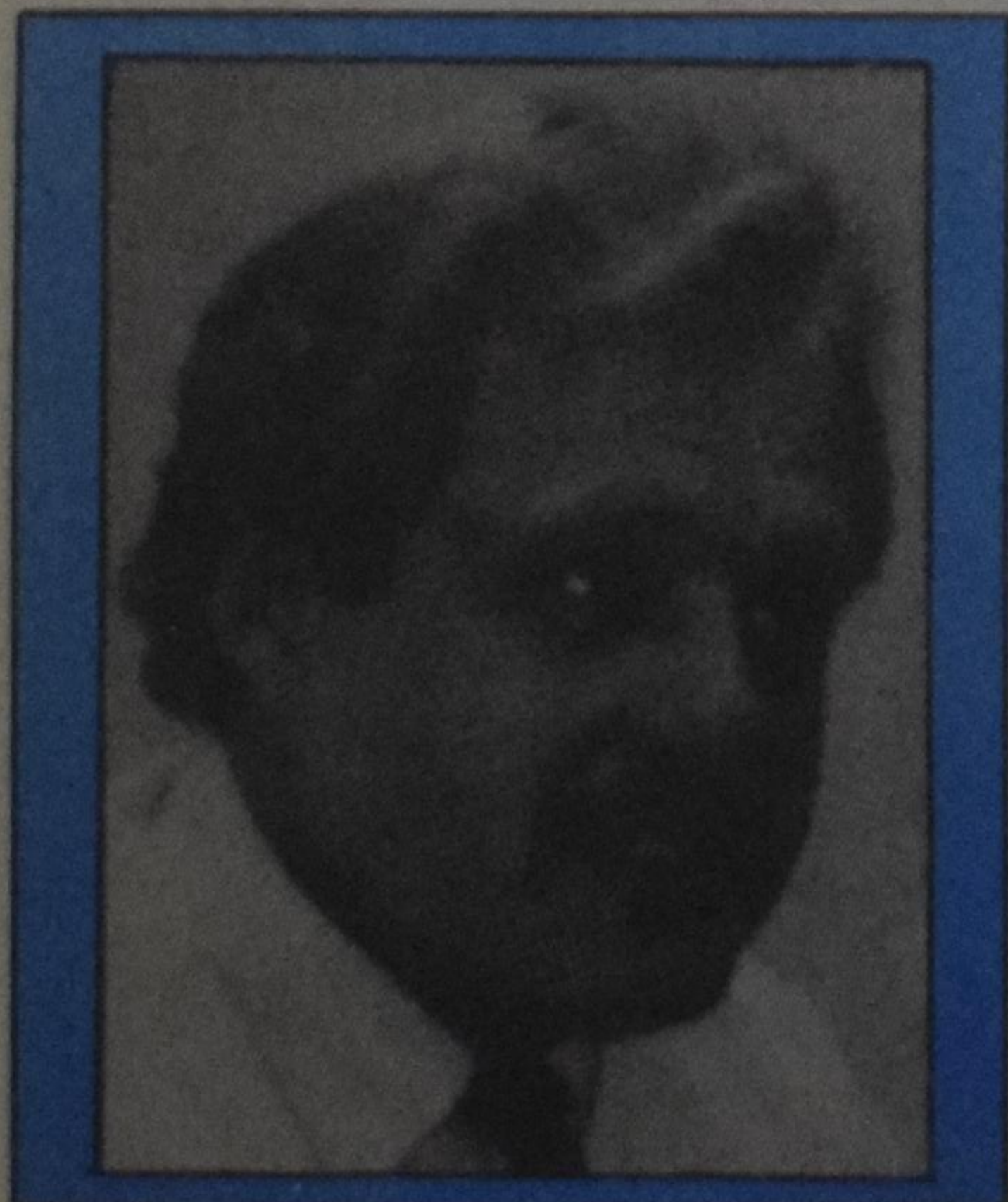


Photo: C.C. files

Rev. Brian Stiller, executive director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Alison de Groot

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Several prominent Christian church leaders in Canada are opposing Canada's offensive role in the Persian Gulf. Some churches have issued public statements outlining their positions while others

have sent their statements directly to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Gerald Vandezande, director of public affairs for Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), says it's important to note that not since World War II have the churches in Canada presented such a united front on an issue. "We all thought a peaceful solution should be found," he admits.

Both the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), which together represent over 40 denominations in Canada, addressed open letters to Mulroney prior to the outbreak of war, calling on him to avoid the use of force against Saddam Hussein.

"War cannot resolve the Gulf crisis. We call on Canada to work urgently at the United Nations to dissuade the Security Council from authorizing the use of force," the CCC letter said. The letter was signed by members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Anglican Church

of Canada, the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In his letter, Brian Stiller, executive director of the EFC, strongly urged Mulroney and his government, "to do everything possible to prevent war." Stiller pointed out that although its members were divided on the general issue of war, some members holding to pacifism and others accepting the "just war" theory, they all agreed that every attempt should be made to avoid war in the Gulf situation. "Those of our members who accept the 'just war' theory are not convinced that the required criteria for a 'just war' have been met," said the letter.

"Just War"

Statements by both the CCC and the EFC, as well as statements made by individual denominations, referred to the "just war" theory in their positions. Arie Van Eek, executive secretary for the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (a member of the EFC), says that although the number

and wording of the criteria for a "just war" vary among denominations, they See **SUPPORT** — p. 2.

Thinkbit:

The use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.

Edmund Burke, *Speech on Conciliation with America*, March 1775.

In this issue:

Christians in Bulgaria are a diverse lot who are finally getting a taste of freedom . . . pp. 10-11
How one church has decided to "discover" and work with other churches . . . p. 12
The final "Linking Spirituality, Vision and Service" instalment looks at how our faith needs to link with our interpersonal relationships . . . p. 13

Support for personnel from Canadian churches

... continued from page 1. all basically ask the same questions: Have all other means to resolve the crisis been exhausted; Is the cause for war legitimate and will peace and justice be restored? Is there balance between the amount of force used and the amount of force necessary? Is there a continuous effort being made to reinstate negotiations for peace?

According to Van Eek and spokespersons for some of the other denominations, their

position hasn't changed despite the actual outbreak of war.

A confusing issue

In a public statement on January 17, the day after coalition forces began air raids on Iraq, Anglican Archbishop Michael Peers rejected the notion that the war in the Gulf was justified. The CCC also issued a statement that day condemning the outbreak of war saying, "This war should never have been started. Kuwait cannot be saved by

destroying it with war."

Given that the war is happening despite their objections, though, the churches are quick to point out the need to support Canadians involved in the conflict. "We certainly want to be supportive of, and it is our Christian duty to pray for, our people," says Van Eek. "We very much support those who are doing their duty. Our issue is not with them, but with the government that sent them there."

Archbishop Peers appealed

to Anglicans to support families of Canadian forces' members and civilians. "I ask all Anglicans, and I join with other Canadian church leaders and all Canadians, to pray fervently for a quick end to the fighting, for the resumption of diplomatic initiatives by both Iraqi and United Nations authorities, and for the containment of this conflict within its present limits," said Peers.

Besides their support for members of the armed forces and civilians involved, the churches also pointed out that their public stand on the issue did not necessarily reflect the stand of every member of their respective denominations.

"It's a confusing issue," says Roger Smith, a spokesperson for the Baptist Conference of Ontario and

Quebec. "When you have discussions with ordinary members of the church, very quickly you will see that we as Christians have a diversity of opinions."

Van Eek says it's true: representative members that belong to CCC or EFC don't go out and take a consensus poll before endorsing a statement. However, he believes his endorsement on behalf of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches reflects the tradition of the CRC. "I can say this is what we have stood for, and whether all members agree or other churches can say the same, I don't know," says Van Eek.

Most churches say they intend to continue their calls for peace and negotiations until the Gulf situation is resolved.

'Just war' principals used to measure war in Gulf

Alison de Groot

ANCASTER, Ont. — The idea of a "just war" has come up often since the beginning of the war in the Persian Gulf. The phrase "just war" or "justifiable war" has been used by both governments and churches in defining their positions on the current war.

The principals which define a "just war" have a long tradition in Christian thought. They go as far back as the time of St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, according to Dr. Justin Cooper, a political scientist and dean of academics at Redeemer Christian College in Ancaster, Ont.

Cooper, who is a course in international relations, described six basic principals which must apply to a war for it to be considered "just" in the Christian tradition. Some denominations mention only six — the Anglican Church, for example — while others divide and expand some principals. The Christian Reformed Church lists nine principals.

The basic principals are:

- war must be initiated by a legitimate authority;
- there must be just cause for war: the intention must be to restore justice and peace, not for gain, in defense of an aggression, in which case the goal must be to return the aggressor to his former place, not destruction or subjugation;
- war must be a last resort;
- there must be a formal declaration of war;
- there must be a reasonable hope for success;
- the good to be achieved must outweigh the evils of war;
- there must be a proportionate

use of force: the use of force must not exceed the goals, force must be used against targets of direct military significance and not against non-combatant targets;

- the enemy must be aware at all times on what terms peace can be had.

Principles, but no consensus

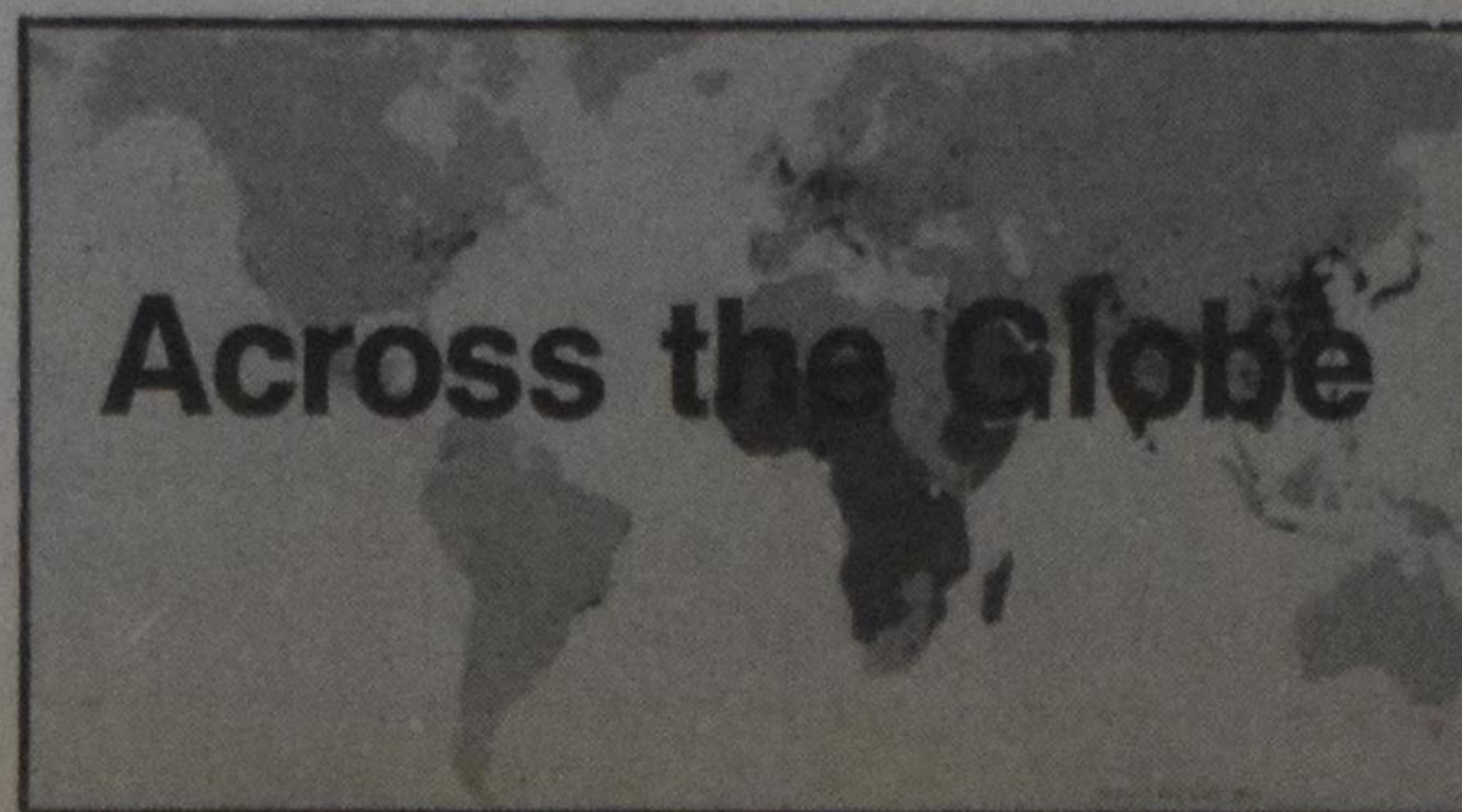
Cooper says people must determine for themselves whether or not the current war in the Persian Gulf fits these criteria. He adds that people's responses will still differ. "In this case, two or three of the principals are quite clearly met: the United States with backing from the United Nations is a legitimate authority, for example. But there can be questions on issues like 'just cause': are they (the Coalition) there to expel Hussein from Kuwait, or to depose the government of Iraq?" asks Cooper.

Cooper says his students are divided, although initial reactions of suspicion and protest are changing to a sort of acceptance of the need for war. "Students had some questions initially about whether or not this was a war for oil, why some sort of recognition of the Palestinian problem could not have been used in bargaining," says Cooper.

Some students thought economic sanctions should have been given more time. Now, Cooper says, students have really been hit by the thought of people their age being killed.

Christian churches in Canada have presented a united front

opposed to Canada's aggressive involvement, saying that the war doesn't meet the "just" criteria. However, they readily admit individual members hold varying opinions.



David T. Koyzis

Prayers and tears

As I sit down to write, this country and several others have been at war with Iraq for just over a week. Like many of you, I was glued to the television set during those first days, watching an unfolding conflict which was not brought into our living rooms so much as we ourselves were transported to the scene of the action — principally through the vivid and unprecedented coverage of Cable News Network (CNN).

Up to the very last moment I was hoping and praying that in my next column I would be able to write how the world had narrowly averted what we had seen coming for five months. It would have been wonderful to report that Saddam Hussein had decided to withdraw from Kuwait and that the Western allies had agreed to the establishment of a grand Middle East peace conference that would address several festering issues at once, including the Palestinian issue and the Lebanese civil war. Unfortunately, this did not happen and much of the world is now engaged in what we must pray will be a short conflict.

As someone born and raised in North America I have not personally lived through war, for which I thank God. However, many of our readers have, and my own father lived through it as a child. As recently as 1974 members of our family on his side became refugees when Turkey invaded Cyprus and occupied the city of Famagusta where they lived.

The events in the Persian Gulf have awakened painful memories of how we felt when, after we learned that their hometown had been taken, two agonizing weeks passed before we received word from them. Although no lives were lost amongst our relatives, they did lose their homes; and my elderly grandparents would suffer the final indignity of dying as exiles. Consequently, I have found myself feeling considerable anguish for those

caught up in this conflict.

Not rational

At this point I am at a loss to think very rationally about the current confrontation. I know and accept the traditional arguments about just war, but I find it difficult to contemplate in a dispassionate manner a real war in which flesh-and-blood people are dying. I am slightly encouraged by reports that allied forces are (thus far) avoiding noncombatant civilian populations and are confining their efforts to disabling military targets. But when I hear that Iraqi troops include conscripts who are little more than frightened children, I become heartsick. And when I am reminded of how various Western countries helped to build Saddam Hussein's war machine, I become angry at the hypocrisy of the current allied effort. Innocents on both sides are now paying the price.

An open Bible lies next to me on my desk. I see the words of Psalm 46, which seem especially meaningful now: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with fire. 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'"

May our God hasten the day when he will break the Scuds and shatter the Patriots, bringing justice and peace to a troubled corner of the globe. In the meantime, may our prayers be mingled with the ears of the suffering.

David T. Koyzis is assistant professor of political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

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Quebec's Liberal party shocked the country with its view of a new Canada which would leave the federal government much like a lame bird with broken wings. Allan Fotheringham called it "a sneak attack on Confederation." The party report which will be submitted to the March 8-10 policy convention in Montreal calls for extensive new powers for La Belle Province, including exclusive control over no less than 22 areas of jurisdiction. The proposals raise many questions. Is Quebec Premier Bourassa a federalist or a sovereignist? Are the many demands a sort of overkill meant to be a starting point for negotiations? If so, how many demands is Bourassa willing to drop from the list? What would be the text of the question, or the questions in the eventual referendum? And on and on and on

Western politicians were quick to voice their disapproval, and they generally called the demands unacceptable. Many commentators saw no difference between the text of the Allaire report and the description of Quebec independence. Amid all this searching for a new Canada my own personal question seems somewhat naïve, but nevertheless appropriate: What was wrong with the old Canada? I am willing to venture an answer to my own question; there were and still are too many power-hungry provincial premiers. What we need is not a further dismantling of the federal government, but rather a constitutional curtailment of provincial powers. There! Pierre Elliot Trudeau, where are you now in the hour of our need? A recent Gallop poll indicated that 75 per cent of Anglophone Canada would rather risk a Quebec separation than giving the provinces more power.

Monsieur has appointed a task force to study what basic powers Ottawa needs to maintain a Canadian economic union. I am reminded of what the Preacher says in the Book of Ecclesiastes: "The more the words, the less the meaning, and how does that profit anyone?"

Like a woman anxious to regain her earlier beauty, Chrétien gave his caucus a bit of a facelift. As with most such cosmetic surgery, the ravages of time are not altogether hidden. The rift between Chrétien and Martin became even more apparent in the fact that there was no role for Martin in the mini-shuffle. Sheila Copps, of earlier rat-pack fame, but

sanitized into a new and improved lady-like package by her handlers, became deputy leader of the caucus. Old faithful Herb Grey may now rest, if not in peace, still in relative obscurity.

The world markets are awash with crude. The Saudi Arabians are pumping ever more oil at maximum capacity and not selling it for higher prices. Oil tankers at Rotterdam and other harbours are backed up for lack of storage space. Oil companies report staggering increases in profits, yet prices at the pump are coming down with the pace of a caterpillar with amputated legs. It makes as much sense as ketchup on cornflakes.

A certain Mr. Peter Norris from Peterborough, Ont., applied for a licence plate that would read GST YUK. Peter paid the licence piper the required \$100, but his money was returned with the message that his plates would be offensive.

Guess who are threatening to strike? The nation's publicans, that's who! Canada's 4,000 tax auditors have been without a contract since May 1990. I hope they'll wait with walking out till I get my tax refund.

Bell Telephone must be the most frequent advertiser on Canadian TV programs. I suspect that one of these days the company will start to offer telephone implants. And speaking about TV, where is Barbara Frum? How can I go to sleep without her "Good Evening"?

The war in the Gulf kept its rightful place on the front pages of the papers. The news is, however, carefully and selectively prepared for distribution. It is difficult to get hard, real-McCoy information. CNN still has a reporter in Baghdad, but the news that emanates from that source is as reliable as a "car that was driven by an old lady only on Sundays to church." The *Globe and Mail* had an interesting observation on the members of the fifth estate in the Gulf area: "Banana Republic chic is the media dress of choice, with lots of camouflage and web vests for

variety, all of it worn hundreds of kilometres from the front."

How much money do you think explodes into nothingness when a Scud meets a Patriot? About two million dollars! All this while many of our fellow human beings are starving. The average fighter plane costs about \$25 million. A professor of political economy at the University of Toronto published a pamphlet entitled: "The Morgan Theory of Permanent War or Homo the Sap." He advances with skill and satire the thesis that a permanent war is necessary to the successful operation of our economic system. In the meantime in the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates the old Cain-and-Abel tragedy is repeated a thousandfold and blood is spilt again and is still crying out to God from the ground.

Most of Iraq's airforce is now stationed in Iran which guarantees that the planes will stay there till the end of the war. Whoever believes that might also be interested in buying shares of a defunct American Loan and Savings Bank. Kuwait is really more a country club than a country and its elite are awaiting the end of the war in Cairo's Safir Hotel in \$3,000-a-month suites.

President Bush delivered his State of the Union address to Congress. The content is familiar to all who read papers, listen to radio or watch TV. This column always knows the interesting details of such events. Did you know that during the address one member of the President's cabinet was missing? Veteran Affairs Secretary Edward Derwinski watched the address in the basement of a Virginia pizza parlour. The reason is that according to White House tradition one cabinet member has to be away from the action, just in case all would perish in a bomb attack on Capitol Hill. The White House refuses to say which of the 17 cabinet members will be the designated absentee until afterwards. In the event of such a catastrophe the non-attendee would be first in line to assume the presidency.

Soviet President Mikhail

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



Gorbachev is thrashing around like a swimmer with a serious case of the cramps and in danger of drowning. He seems to be no longer in control of his own government and at best he is sharing power with right-wing military officials. The Bush-Gorbachev summit is postponed like the discussion of a report of an unwanted committee: "Till a later date." Many Soviet troops have pulled out of Lithuania, but many sites remain occupied by black beret Interior Ministry troops.

Two South African rivals — Mandela and Buthelezi met in an effort to make peace and end bloodshed in the townships. One can only hope that their efforts will be sincere and successful. The strife between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party is one of long-standing and bloody history.

The *Virginia Gazette* has issued a warning: "April is

Child Prevention Month." Now what does that mean? And this was overheard in an airport bar: "I never drink anything stronger than pop. Mind you, my old pop could really belt them back." And a frustrated elder asked me if I knew the difference between a liturgist and a terrorist. When I admitted ignorance he said that it was possible to negotiate with the latter.

Carl Tuyl is a chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada.

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Henry Steenbergen, Secretary of Student Fund Committee
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Those presently receiving aid should reapply. Completed application forms should be received by April 1, 1991.

Commentary

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How do we celebrate?

Anne Hutten

Last summer we celebrated the marriage of a son. This was a first for us, and it took months of planning. We had many discussions as to the location, timing, number of guests, food. But in the final analysis, the wedding was a rather informal affair, with some 175 people gathering at our farm for dinner and a barn dance.

One friend pointed out to me that the big celebrations of our lives are far more than isolated events. A wedding, he said, makes a statement to the community around you. Like the potlatch of earlier Native Canadians, it determines who you are. It says something about your status. The way in which you celebrate conveys a message to the world.

I've given his comments a certain amount of thought since then. His analysis is on target for anyone, of course. But it makes even more sense to those who confess that, both in life and in death, we belong to our faithful Saviour. Our celebrations are so much more than private events.

This theme has just been tested again with our Christmas and New Year festivities. I've been asking myself how our December thoughts and activities fit in with the general principles of Christian celebration. It seems to me there are at least two ways in which church members celebrate.

The right balance

On the one hand, we have people who are very much aware of being Christian, who urgently try to show their faith in every situation. Sometimes this is carried to extremes, as when a wedding reception becomes a litany of hymns and pious toasts. At our June wedding, at least one guest was scandalized because a "dance" was involved. From this point of view, Christians have to be terribly careful how they express their happiness. They need to be sober and always ready with a Bible text.

On the other end of the scale are those who celebrations are no different from those of unbelievers. At some New Year's Eve parties, alcohol becomes a major obsession. Conversation runs to beautiful homes, successful jobs and similar material signs of well-being. Others celebrate at obscenely expensive restaurants, taking pride in their high status and good taste, without a thought of stewardship. From this viewpoint, Christians, too, should have fun, fun, fun!

What is the right balance? Should I suggest that everyone celebrate as we did last June? And how do we put into practice the theory that festivities should reflect our Christian beliefs?

I thoroughly enjoyed Paul and Rose's wedding. Neighbour women served a delicious meal. We feasted on barbecued chicken and pork chops, salads and, as a sop to our Dutch background, "gebak" for dessert. The weather was cold for June, but we moved the whole shebang indoors to the hayloft, already prepared for the barn dance. Relatives, church friends, community members mingled easily and talked up a storm.

Let your celebration reflect you

Looking back, I'd say the wedding reflected who we are as a family. We tend to be hospitable

and the number of guests reflected that, as did the menu. We're not always well-organized, and that showed itself in the food service being a bit slow when we had to move indoors. We tend to let our sons make their own decisions, which resulted in dance music that not all the older guests enjoyed. We are quite involved with the local farm community, which meant a number of guests who are neither of Dutch background nor necessarily church members. None of us like long-winded speeches, and so the guests heard only a few simple toasts.

And we celebrated! We were happy that our son had found a wife, that she is a professing Christian, and that we now have a daughter. We were glad to have the whole family together and to have so many people rejoicing with us. Even I, raised to think of dancing as the devil's lure, found myself kicking up my heels and stomping to the (loud) music.

So did that wedding say anything about our beliefs? Was it any kind of testimony to our neighbours? I could evaluate this in terms of what *didn't* happen. No one got drunk; in fact, there was very little drinking. No one used foul language, at least in my hearing. If dancing encourages lust, there was no evidence of it at this wedding.

An extension of your faith

But I'd like to think our celebrations are part of a larger context. Our neighbours know we go to church on Sundays. I hope they also see our lives fitting into a pattern of Christian faith. When a barn burns down nearby, do we ignore it or do we donate hay for the cattle? When a young woman gets pregnant outside of marriage, do we gossip or do we reach out and help her? Do we visit the older neighbours shut up in nursing homes?

Only when our lives show evidence of Christian action will our celebrations carry a similar message. At that wedding last June we could have sung hymns all night; we could have had a "dry" party with no liquor at all; we could have had a tightly regulated program of songs and speeches. At Christmas we could go to church four times and refuse to attend parties that don't measure up to our standards. But what our neighbours will remember is how well this all fit in with who we are, with how we act the rest of the year.

And having said all that, I'm glad we chose to have a real party last June. We had fun. We talked. We danced. We rejoiced. We didn't worry too much about showing a Christian witness through our celebration because the wedding was simply an extension of who we are the rest of the year.

May your celebrations this year also make an important statement about who you are. Will the message be a Christian one?

Anne Hutten is a journalist and farmer who lives in the Anapolis Valley of Nova Scotia.

Letters

Art critique insightful, necessary

Thank you for the excellent art review of "Fathers and Sons" by Agnes Kramer-Hamstra. Even though she says that she is not an art critic, her keen sense of observation and interpretation inspired me enough to drive to Redeemer College to see the show and I was not disappointed.

These two artists have a message for our contemporary society that is insightful, and insight can bring a measure of healing and understanding. As in Jamie Thompson's painting of the son, we need to strip away the barbed

wire frame of reference with its macho images that inhibit us from becoming caring and loving human beings.

I hope C.C. will increase the frequency of its arts (visual) coverage. We need to be aware of and increase our understanding of and the importance of the visual arts in the Reformed community and C.C. is a good vehicle for broadening our spiritually guided visual senses.

George Langbroek
St. Catharines, Ont.

Wants to help Romanians

I enjoyed reading Bert Witvoet's articles about Eastern Europe. I was especially impressed by the last one about his visit to Romania. Now I would like to reach out to the people, preferably to Christians there.

The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) is setting up "Operation Solidarity" to reach out to the Polish people, and we will be a part of that out-reach.

But I understand that the Romanian people need our help as much if not more. Could you give us the name and address of a Romanian family so that we

can send a "care package" to them on a regular basis? Thank you.

Irene Heerema
Thunder Bay, Ont.

We suggest you contact the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee in Canada, P.O. Box 5070, 3475 Mainway, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8; (416) 336-2920. If they can't give you specific information they will be able to direct you to some other Christian relief agencies or churches who can.

Editor

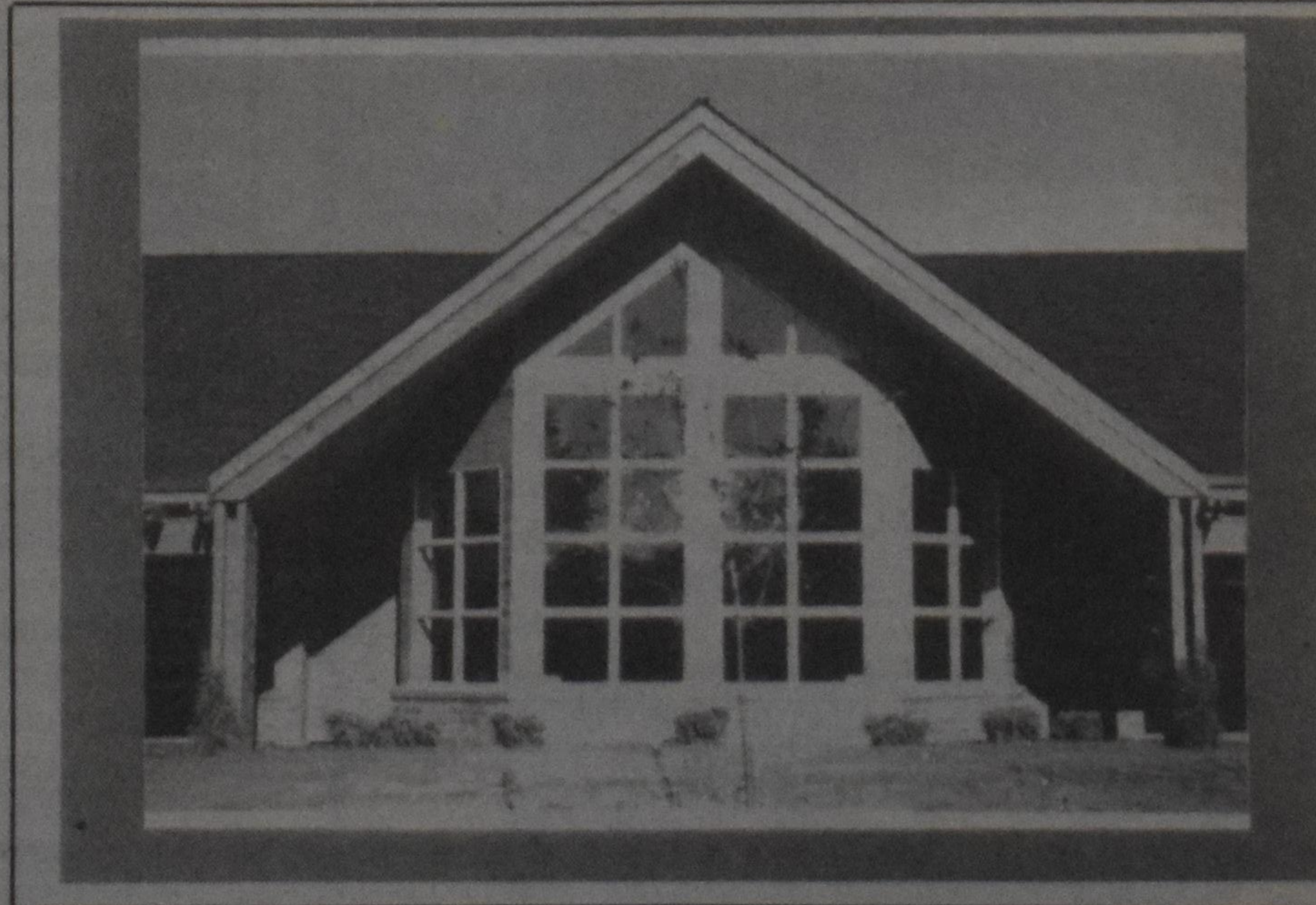
Doesn't like greasy toilets

If you are planning in the future to print more stories like "A greasy situation" by Marian den Boer in *Calvinist Contact* of January 11, I

suggest you lower the price of subscriptions.

Arthur Stelpstra
London, Ont.

New school linked to growing trees, commemorates 30 years of education growth



C.C. staff

WINNIPEG — Its beautiful new building is helping the Calvin Christian School of Winnipeg celebrate its 30th

anniversary, reports principal John Doornbos.

The striking, open design features a canopy all around the building and a spacious lobby with a cathedral ceiling and a live tree growing in it.

Growing trees, in fact, accent the whole building. Two special trees were planted near the building. One is the students' tree and the other is the teachers' tree, both symbolizing the fact that students and teachers need to grow in good soil, rooted in the Scriptures.

The new building has 15 classrooms for the school's 304 students. It cost \$2 million, with volunteer construction crews saving \$400,000, and a government grant contributing \$125,000.

Like the lilies



Marian den Boer



The 'old' Dutch mother

When I, a young, brand-new mother, was in the hospital 12 years ago, I shared the room with two other young, brand-new mothers and an "old" Dutch woman. She must have been almost 40! She had four children at home. She missed them dearly and chatted with them on her bedside phone at least once a day.

We had a good time in that ward, the four of us. We talked and laughed, trading stories about our husbands.

Then on about day three, while the rest of us were still wincing over our stitches, Mrs. VanderZee, the "old lady" among us hopped out of bed and packed her things. The doctor had given her permission to return home to her family. She was eager to see her children, for in those days and in that hospital, children were not allowed to visit.

Strange energy source

Before she left we all traded addresses and promised to keep in touch. We never told Mrs. VanderZee, but we three young mothers felt she was rather an anomaly and wondered how in the world having a fifth baby at her age could make her so happy. And her delight in going home to a house full of children with her tiny, completely dependent newborn was incomprehensible to us. Where would she get the energy?

The three of us took comfort in knowing that at least when we returned to our quiet little abodes we would be able to sleep and rest while our babies slept (we assumed).

In those first years we three young mothers kept in touch by phone and through visits. We even had joint birthday parties for our babies. There at the parties, we would wonderingly remember Mrs. VanderZee with whom we all exchanged Christmas cards. She couldn't get to the parties because she lived way out in the country and had five children.

Well, 12 years later here I am, almost 40, in the hospital, overjoyed with my fifth baby.

Experience the best teacher

I miss my four other children dearly and talk to them on my bedside phone at least once a day. The highlight of my stay here has been their visit. They are all so very happy and excited about their new little sister.

There is a smiling young nurse here: she gives needles with a grin. Today she came to my bedside, a clipboard full of questions in her hand. She asked me how old I was. "Thirty-eight," I said.

She asked me how many children I had at home. "Four," I said.

"You must be Dutch," she concluded.

"What makes you think that?" (Why was I thinking of Mrs. VanderZee?)

"Well," she said, "Dutch people just seem to have lots of babies, regardless."

"Maybe they love each other," I conjectured.

"Maybe they don't know when to stop," she answered.

I know she found it incomprehensible that I could be truly delighted with my new baby at my age. And now that I think about it, Mrs. VanderZee wasn't "old" at all!

Marian den Boer is a free-lance writer who lives in Hamilton, Ont.

BEYOND BELIEF



FIRST RONALD RAN
OUT OF CHEEKS...



THWAP



KUR-FLUMP



...THEN HE RAN
OUT OF RELIGION



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How personalities affect politics

Paul Marshall

One of the great tragedies in South Africa is Nelson Mandela's age. He is one of the few leaders, and the only *political* leader, who can appeal to people across the political spectrum. In his European and North American tours he was able to impress and move cynical and skeptical political leaders. Even Mrs. Thatcher, who was not inclined to praise anyone unnecessarily, and who previously had little respect for him, spoke of him in almost glowing terms after their meeting. This personal appeal makes him virtually indispensable in the political renewal of that divided country. But, despite his comparatively good health even after decades of imprisonment, a man in his 70s is necessarily a frail source for long-term hope.

I was aware of Mandela's significance even before going to South Africa, but it was only while there that I sensed something of F. W. de Klerk's similar importance. He is widely praised, even by opponents (except those on the right, to whom he is a traitor). He may be criticized as unrealistic, too late, or as unwittingly offering yet another version of white privilege, but few doubt his integrity or sincerity.

In a recent television interview, Mandela hinted that he might be prepared to call for an ending of sanctions even before apartheid was *de facto* ended. With de Klerk in mind, he went on: "We might be content with a declaration of intent because of our experience of this man." Indeed, despite its strains, the personal rapport between Mandela and de Klerk is one of the most hopeful features of the situation.

Personal and political

During the recent violence in the Transvaal, a delegation of Church leaders (including Frank Chikane and Desmond Tutu) met with de Klerk to pass on dossiers alleging police bias in the conflicts. While they got no promise, they spoke of their sense of being both genuinely listened to and respected.

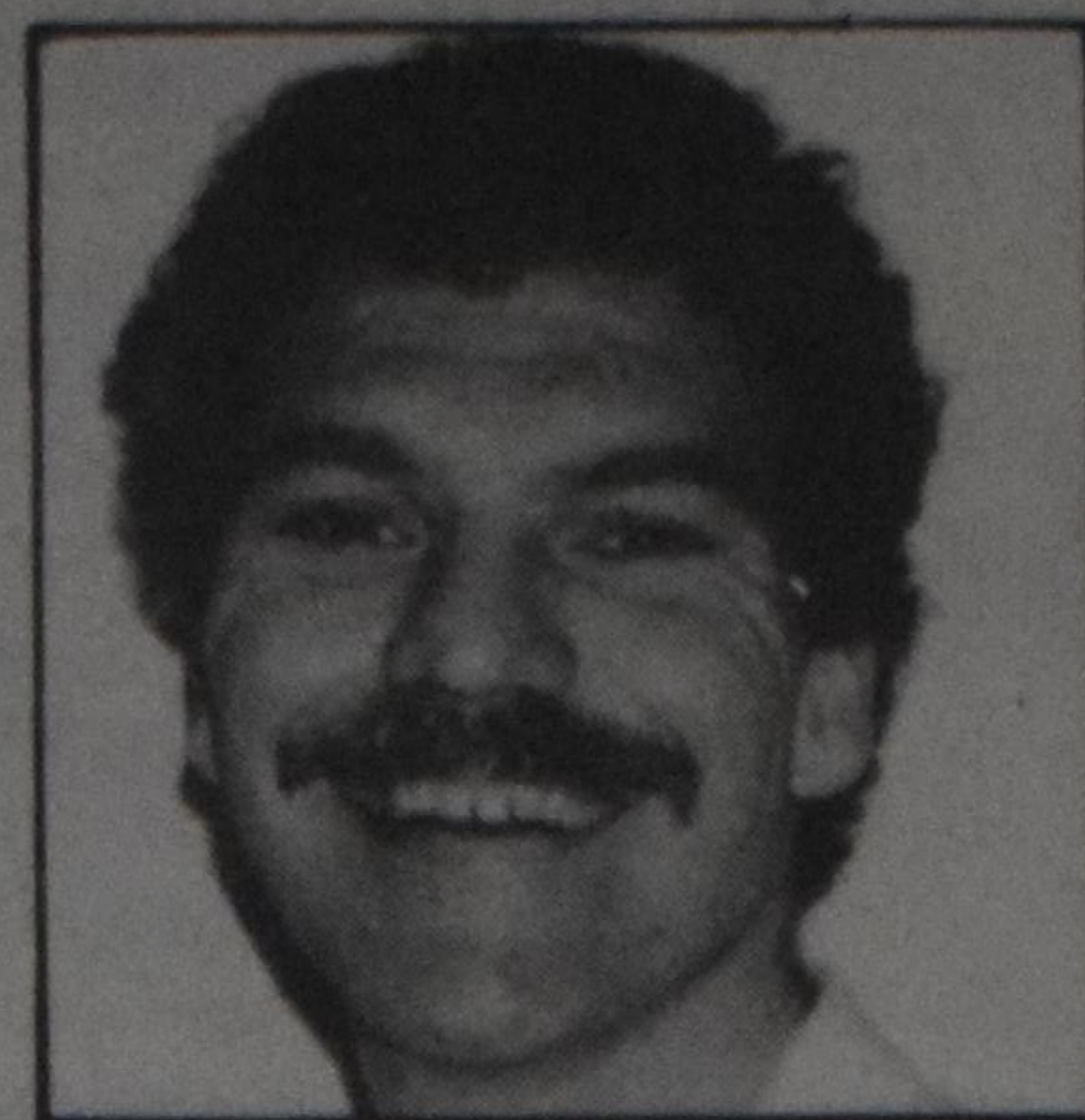
These events raise the question of how important personal qualities are in making political changes. I think that many Christians

exaggerate the importance of such qualities. Sometimes some people give the impression that if only more upright, pious (and evangelical) politicians were elected then our problems would be solved. This is certainly not the case, as citizens in the American South, or Northern Ireland, or, most notably, South Africa itself, can testify. Many of their problems stem from personally honest, pious politicians with unChristian political ideas. It is not only personal qualities but political goals that matter. Someone may be a nice next-door neighbour, but you still don't want them running your country.

Nor do good personal qualities themselves solve political disagreements. Whether it's a question of tax rates or, as in South Africa, a whole new political organization of the country, decisions need to be made. The decision will go one way or another and it will require a political judgment. Two good people who disagree can't both be right. The question of the proper political strategy must be faced.

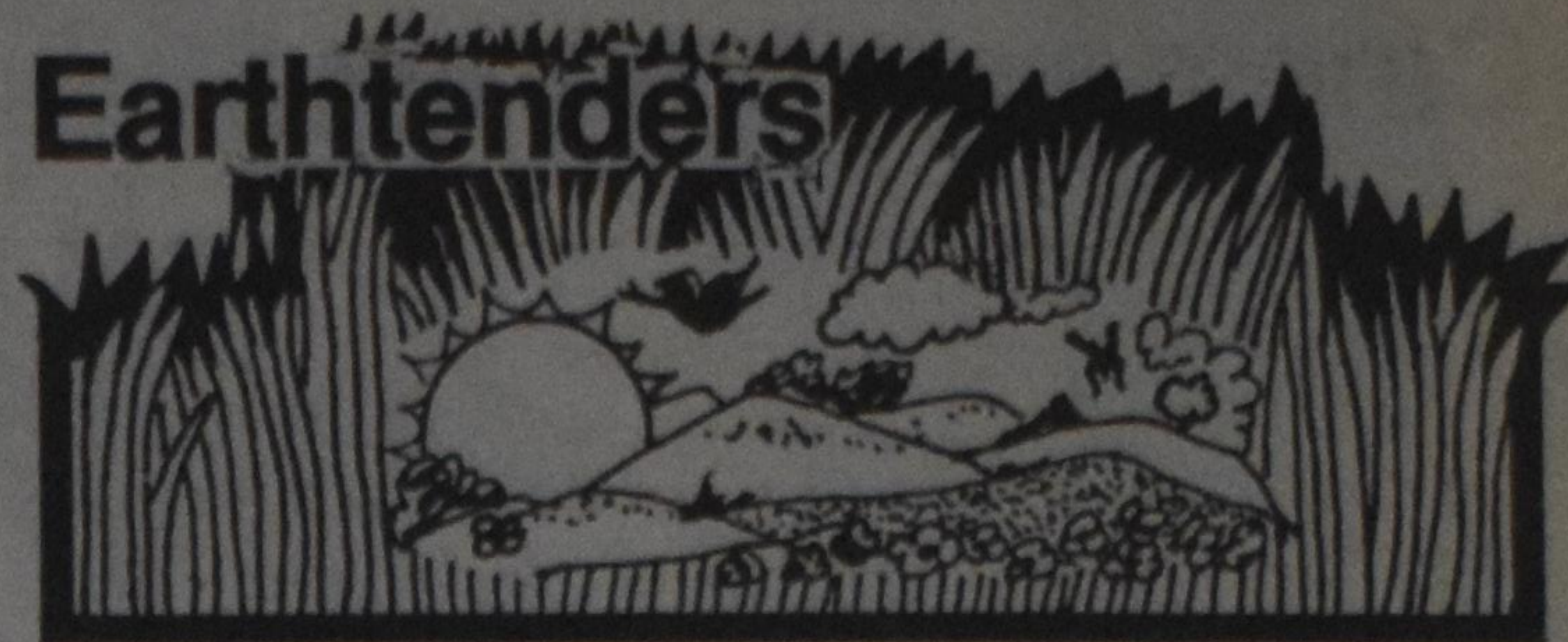
Don't be sidetracked

How, then, do personal qualities help (or hinder) politics? Basically, I think, by allowing politics to be itself and not be sidetracked by other matters. If people are too proud or defensive to listen to someone else, then the political



Harry Spaling

Earthtenders



Our place and task in the environment

The ecology of war

The casualties of war are many. Human lives are sacrificed. Nations are destroyed. Economic burdens are immense.

Another casualty of war was brought vividly to the world's attention by the hostilities in the Gulf. Millions of barrels of oil have spilled into Gulf waters. Some call it environmental terrorism while others refer to it as a military tactic. Whatever the label, the environment is an innocent, silent casualty of war.

About 11 million barrels of oil have contaminated marine waters, creating an oil slick some 55 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide. This huge slick is several times the size of the Exxon Valdez spill along the Alaska coast in 1989. Now there is possible evidence of a second slick forming after military attacks on an offshore oil installation.

An immediate human concern is that the oil slick threatens coastal desalinization plants which produce potable water from seawater. In addition, the fishing industry will also suffer a serious economic blow.

Oil starves marine life

From an ecological view, the relatively shallow depth and warm water temperature of the Persian Gulf create ideal conditions for a very productive marine environment. Oil will seriously alter this productivity. Surface oil will block sunlight from reaching micro-organisms known as phytoplankton. These micro-organisms are the basis of the food chain on which all marine life depends. Nature's food supply will gradually be reduced.

More visible are the effects of oil on birds and larger animals. Oil restricts their movement and flight, hindering their ability to find food

or seek uncontaminated habitat.

The natural productivity of the Gulf's marine ecosystem will take decades to recover. Millions of people who depend on its water and marine resources will have to wait for the environmental casualty of war to heal itself.

Suffering creation

The Gulf War, of course, is not the first conflict to affect the environment. Throughout history many wars have affected the environment in some way. In Vietnam, the controversial chemical defoliant "agent orange" was used extensively. The 15-year war in Lebanon has dramatically reduced its wildlife, including rare migratory birds.

Modern technology and weaponry increase the scale at which war harms the environment. In the Gulf, environmental nightmares may still come with chemical and biological weapons. In addition to immense human suffering, the release of toxins into the environment causes untold damage among natural living organisms, many of which are important to agriculture and other economic resources.

Faced with the many horrors of war, we rarely speak of the suffering instilled on the creation. Yet, the created order suffers silently and deeply from the carnage and destruction of human conflict. The Gulf war shows that peace among humans is a condition for harmony in Creation.

Harry Spaling is a doctoral student in geography at the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ont.



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issues are not faced. If people hate one another, then political issues cannot be faced. If people mistrust one another then political issues will not be faced.

But if there is openness, honesty and trust, then these

types of problems can be overcome. The rubbish can be cleared away and the different viewpoints can be addressed.

This doesn't mean that political differences will disappear. It doesn't mean they will be easy to solve. But it does mean that they *can be addressed*, and this is at least a step in dealing with them.

Humility and honesty will

not themselves solve political problems, but they can, at the least, prevent arrogance and deviousness from being additional problems.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. He has recently been in South Africa, speaking on the topic of human rights.

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Arts/News

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Alice

Rated PG

Stars Mia Farrow, William Hurt, Joe Mantegna, Keye Luke
Written and directed by Woody Allen

Woody Allen is at it again; at comedy, that is. *Alice* has a "message," as most Allen films do, but it is positively light and whimsical compared to Allen's previous probing, theological-philosophical venture, *Crimes and Misdemeanors*.

In *Alice*, Allen relies on his pleasantly skewed comic abilities to expose the vacant, out-of-touch lifestyles of the urban very-rich. He doesn't take nasty pot-shots at people he knows nothing of, however. Having acquired fame and fortune himself, but never having allowed himself to become enamoured with (or even to acquire) the attendant rich-and-famous lifestyle, Allen gently pokes fun of people for whom material goods are the lynch-pin of existence. He does his gentle prodding without the least bit of moral condescension.

Alice (Mia Farrow) is a New York socialite who has married into an even "better," more powerful, upper-crust family. She has everything: two perfect children who attend a posh, private school; a nanny; a housekeeper; a masseuse; a work-out coach; a huge, opulent apartment; a personal hairdresser; equally rich and idol "friends"; she feels she's happily married to a good-looking husband (William Hurt) with a secure job and a family fortune.

Can't buy me love

Her husband thinks she has no reason to be unhappy; so does she — until she meets the single father of one of her children's classmates. He is attentive and interesting and suddenly she realizes her husband is neither of those things. Bit by bit she begins to question the purpose of her life.

Alice has been the perfect wife, her husband's showpiece at company events, but he doesn't take her seriously. When she talks about taking a course of some kind — a *serious* course involving writing or literature, he shrugs it off, asserting she has no talent for such a thing and suggesting she work at a friend's boutique which is being financed by the friend's husband to keep his wife "occupied."

Alice's boredom and feeling of uselessness start taking their physical toll. She visits a Chinese-American doctor/acupuncturist who immediately sees psychological underpinnings in her backaches, headaches, depression, and treats each of her problems with a different herb.

That's where the whimsy starts. Woody Allen deftly mixes fantasy and reality in a way which allows his protagonist to rediscover the significance of her Catholic roots and, consequently, to realize that there is more to life than facelifts and afternoon tea.

One herb makes the normally meek Alice temporarily assertive and seductive. Another herb makes her temporarily invisible, during which she uncovers intimate details about the man she has been drawn to, and discovers that her husband is a philanderer who is very different at the office than he is at home. A third herb rustles up the ghost of her long-dead first love; he offers her good advice about her current life, they soar over Manhattan together and dance together one more time.

Easy choice?

All of this opens Alice's eyes to herself and the real world beyond Park Avenue. When a last herb offers her an opportunity for life-long happiness with her husband — or with whatever man she chooses to give the herb to — she must decide whether it's right to adopt that painless, ready-made solution to her problems.

Alice makes her choice and the film ends on an up-beat note, though not in the way viewers might expect.

It is interesting that Woody Allen, who is Jewish and who in previous films has examined many issues from out of some kind of Judaic tradition, has made his protagonist in this film a Catholic. Some of the film's humour derives from Allen's acute awareness of the foibles of Catholic Christianity — but he always laughs *with* rather than *at* Roman Catholicism.

Though Alice's life is revived by a renewed commitment to her faith, it's a do-gooder kind of commitment because Allen doesn't understand the heart of the Gospel. While he uses Mother Teresa as the ultimate example of the kind of "good works" he admires, Allen fails to comprehend the Good News which motivates her.

If this film has a major flaw, it is that — which is not so much a failure in filmmaking as not having (at this point in his life, anyway) the eyes of faith to see what can be seen.

Abortion issue not over despite Senate defeat

Alison de Groot

OTTAWA — The fight for abortion legislation is not over for Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), a Christian group with Reformed roots which lobbies on issues of social justice. Gerald Vandezande, spokesperson for the group, says CPJ's fight will continue on two fronts despite the fact that the Senate defeated the abortion bill in a tie vote January 31.

Canadians now have a responsibility to provide support, affordable housing, adequate daycare and income security for mothers and families in order to provide real choice, says Vandezande, who intends to lobby for those provisions. Vandezande encourages churches to find ways to provide "creative supports and services" so that no decision to have an abortion is made out of material poverty.

In a second move, CPJ has already been in touch with the prime minister's office and will continue to put pressure on Mulroney to reintroduce Bill C-43, the same bill just defeated in Senate, in the House of Commons. Although the Mulroney government has said it would not introduce another piece of abortion legislation during this term of government, Vandezande says, "This wouldn't be a new piece of legislation, it's the same one that passed in the elected House and should have passed in the Senate."

Vandezande adds that the pro-life movement will regret having lobbied against Bill C-43 now that Canada will be without any legal guidelines for abortions. "No government is going to touch this now," says Vandezande. The suggestion that provinces be responsible for legislating or regulating abortion will produce a checkerboard effect across Canada, says Vandezande, with some provinces throwing open all access and others

closing the doors.

Vandezande says he hopes the people who have been

fighting for legislation of abortions aren't too "burned up" now to continue the fight.

Weekly Puzzle

by Robert O. Wilson

ACROSS
1 Structure
5 Bothersome person
9 Aspect
14 To shelter
15 Lily plant
16 Kingly
17 Coin
18 Tear
19 Members of royalty
20 Pocketbook kin
22 Unruffled
23 Count (on)
24 Border
25 Art support
27 Jet e.g.
32 Alphabet run
33 Ducks
35 Pinochle term
36 Six to an inning
38 Fr. painter
40 3-number lottery prize
41 Eats carefully
43 Sp. gent
45 Estuary
46 Magnificence
48 Large artery
50 Sixth sense
51 Loafing
52 Pavement type
56 Put together
60 T-bone
61 Evict
62 Prosaic
63 "Thereby hangs —"
64 Unrestrained
65 Tolled
66 Overlord
67 So-so
68 Leg joint

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Last Week's Puzzle

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A	L	B	A		S	T	A	L	E		D	N	L	I
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47 Military medal: abbr.	54 Unimagined 55 Macho
49 Comment	56 Emanation
51 Immigrant from Osaka	57 Cereal 58 Occupation
52 Despot	59 Border
53 AK island	61 Switch word

**Editor
Bert Witvoet
returns
to his desk
for the Feb. 15th
issue.**

**Calendar of Events
returns next week
and
Crossword
Puzzle
is on page 7.**

cruises · coach tours · caribbean hotels · south pacific · car rentals ·

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Ontario CRC pioneer remembered



Peter Hogeterp

C.C. staff, from notes by Peter Hogeterp
HAGERSVILLE, Ont. — A

man who was among the earliest groups of post-World War Two Dutch immigrants to come to Ontario and a "Christian Reformed pioneer" died on Nov. 26, 1990. Cornelis M. Hogeterp, 82, of Hagersville, passed away after a long struggle with cancer. Hogeterp died just two weeks after his wife of nearly 59 years, Dorothy (Elzinga) Hogeterp, had passed away.

The Hogerterps came to southern Ontario as agricultural workers as part of the Netherlands-Canadian Settlement Scheme. They left their native land in 1947 on the second ship to leave the Netherlands after the war, the *Tabinta*. Much later, Cornelis and Dorothy Hogeterp would be featured as 1947 immigrants in the book *To All Our*

Children (Paideia Press, 1983).

Hogeterp was the last surviving founding elder of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church (CRC), Jarvis, Ont. That church and First CRC in Kitchener, Ont., were the first two CRCs established in Ontario after the War. (They were then a part of the denomination's Classis Grand Rapids East!).

As one of the earliest, struggling immigrants, Hogeterp "always appreciated most strongly the kind and generous help received from the American Christian Reformed Churches," says his son Peter C. Hogeterp, a pastor at First CRC, London, Ont. Thus Cornelis Hogeterp hoped that his denomination would always remain one church even though it existed in two

countries in North America, Peter adds.

Relentless

Yet Cornelius Hogeterp became "incurably Canadian," and was "incurably Christian Reformed," notes Peter. Cornelis was also a founding elder of a second church, Immanuel CRC in Simcoe, Ont., which was formed out of the first church in whose founding he participated. He envisioned that "some day there would be Christian Reformed Churches in every town along the major highways intersecting at Jarvis," Peter asserts.

That was not to be, not the least reason being that as the 1950s wore on, the immigration flood dried to a trickle.

However, only four months before his death Hogeterp saw yet another church for whose founding he had worked, come into being: the Hagersville Community CRC.

He had no patience for those who said it couldn't be done, whether for lack of finances or lack of personnel. "His early immigration experience gave him enormous faith in the church-building power of our covenant God," says his son. Though his ill health prevented him from ever worshipping at Hagersville Community, Hogeterp followed the church's birth pangs with keen interest.

Cornelis Hogeterp is survived by six daughters, one son (a second son passed away in 1969), 35 grandchildren, 42 great-grandchildren, three brothers and a sister.

Nurture should be key of new youth ministry, says Christian Reformed report

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — After a two-year study, a committee of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) recommends that the church raise the level of youth ministry to an official church activity. The committee looked at several models, including its own history in North America. It concluded that a model of nurture best fits the church's covenant theology.

Youth in the CRC are highly committed to the church, according to a survey commissioned by the committee. Over 85 per cent testified they try to live a life

pleasing to God. Nine of 10 attend church services every Sunday. Seven of those nine say they go because it is important to them. They also faulted the church for not doing a good job of guiding them. Most wanted their church to do more, and 27 per cent judged their church to be doing poorly in youth ministries.

The CRC has allowed several para-church agencies, under the umbrella of United Calvinist Youth, to handle its youth ministries. Around 70 per cent of all CRC youth also attend Reformed Church day schools. The committee praised these organizations,

but acknowledged they were not accountable to the church and that there are not good lines of communication with schools and agencies.

The report of the committee charged the church was not giving real status to its youth members. Youth ministries are not part of pastoral training, they have little or no part in church budgets, and they were a low priority for pastors surveyed.

Other models

Looking at other churches, they found different models for youth ministry. They identified a cultural preservation model

that worked to preserve an ethnic identity and heritage for youth. They found a service station/conscience approach that decentralized ministry while having a national minister for youth who is the conscience of local churches. And they found a discipleship model, in which youth ministry is primarily aimed at bringing youth to Christ and teaching them to bring others.

The committee proposed a nurture model. This model assumes that youth are full members of the church. The church has the responsibility to face developmental issues for youth. Ministry to youth

involves relationships more than program and must be intergenerational. The committee described the model as Christ-centred, celebrative, relational, caring, serving and obedient. It called on the church to see that every youth had service opportunities in the church.

The 49-page report recommended that a Youth Ministry division be created in the CRC. The report will be considered at the 1991 CRC synod.

Two Presbyterian groups discuss union

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Over the last year, an idea has been growing within the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC). This older American Presbyterian church is thinking about a union with a younger group, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). The EPC is about a decade old and already has 50,000

members. The ARPC is long into its second century and has about 40,000 members. The ARPC has institutions, history, and tradition, while the EPC has very little of these, except that they consider themselves in a Presbyterian line.

In mid-1989, according to ARPC Moderator, Reynolds Young, the two churches met

for a day informally. Then the ARPC synod approved more formal talks. Late in 1990, representatives of the two met for two days of talks. They discussed the various ministries of each and found agreement of purpose in areas

of youth, mission and church planting. They found some theological differences, and decided to have their representative theologians get together for discuss these.

Young described the process as two people liking each other

and having a date. They have not ruled out marriage and want another date. They must, however, take a closer look at each other's theology before they "get serious."

Strategy change wins converts

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (EP) — A change in mission strategy is reaping thousands of conversions in the Republic of the Ivory Coast's southwestern region, report mission leaders of the Christian and

Missionary Alliance (C&MA). For most of its 60 years in the West African nation, C&MA mission workers concentrated their efforts on church-planting in the central region of the country.

About 10 years ago, the mission group began receiving an increased number of requests for Bibles and Bible teachers from other areas. Many of these were probably the result of radio broadcasts which were able to reach previously unreached areas.

In recent years the mission began to respond to the requests by "re-deploying personnel on the basis of response rather than geography," according to a C&MA news report. "The results amazed even the most forward-looking missionaries." C&MA estimates that the shift in strategy has resulted in over 20,000 new believers in the past seven years.

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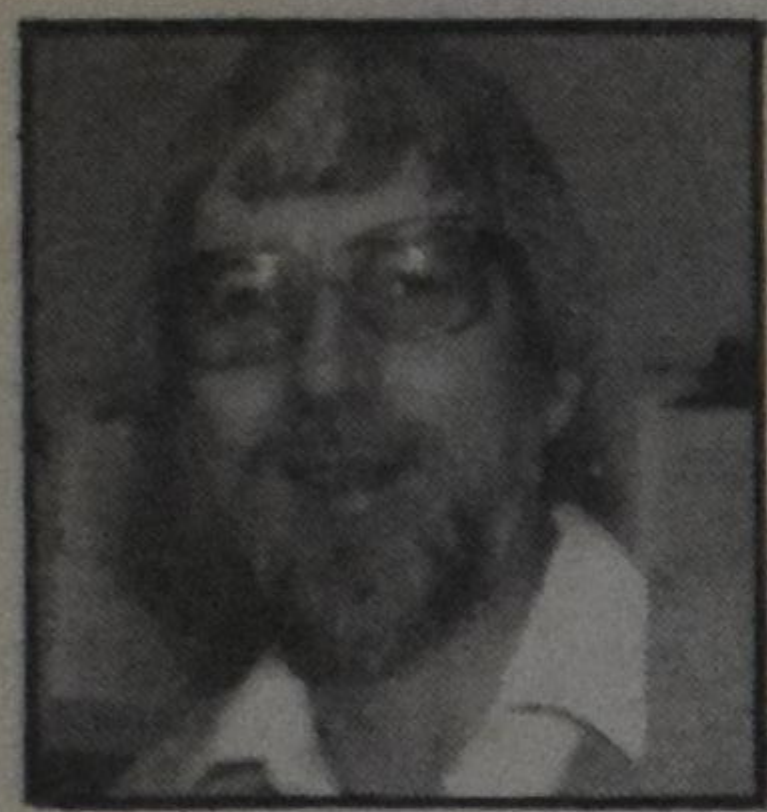
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A Presbyterian Comments

Robert J. Bernhardt

If the church is sending a missionary to Africa, to Asia or to a sparsely populated island in the Pacific, we have certain expectations of the candidate. We expect that person either to know the language spoken at their destination or to be prepared to put a top priority on learning it. We expect that person to be or become an avid student of the culture in the place to which he or she is going. After all, we do understand that you cannot be very effective in sharing the faith with people whose life and culture you do not understand.

However, I wonder if our expectations about the knowledge of language and culture are rigorous enough for the ones who stay home to minister in their native land. Well, that's different isn't it? People already know what they need to know, don't they? What is there to learn?

An excellent article in the September 1990 issue of *Urban Mission* offers evidence that we should reject all such quick assumptions. Glenn Smith, the

executive director of Christian Direction, a multi-faceted resource centre serving churches across Quebec, presents some challenging information and raises some searching questions for Canadian Christians.

Did you know?

For instance, do you realize that there are 25 metropolitan areas in Canada which have a population of 100,000 or more people in them? Would it surprise you to learn that four of the top 10, and nine of the 25 are in Ontario?

If asked to name the Canadian city with the fastest rate of growth during the period of 1981-86, would you have said Saskatoon? Did you realize that 30.5 per cent of the whole population of Canada lives within the three metropolitan areas of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver? If asked to choose, would you have guessed that Quebec is the most urbanized province in Canada?

Do you think of Canada as a

rural or an urban country? The land is so vast, our natural resources are immense, and we have a long tradition of agriculture, lumbering and mining. However, do you realize that 78 per cent of the Canadian population now lives in cities?

If we who live here do not recognize or understand these realities, what difference does it really make? For many of us, high school geography courses were a long time ago, and though we know our population has been shifting toward the city, do we really grasp what that ought to mean for the life and mission of the Christian church?

Church seems irrelevant

Do you realize that church attendance in Canada is dropping off? How much would you estimate church attendance in Protestant denominations in Canada to have declined in the past 40 years? How close was your estimate to 35 per cent? Are you

startled to hear that it is estimated that less than two per cent of the population of metropolitan Vancouver affiliates with a local church? Does all this concern you? What are you intending to do about it? Should we be concerned or is this simply what God intends for Canada?

There are, I believe, two problems. One is that we do not seem to clearly recognize and understand the significance of what is happening in our own country. If that is so, we are then rather like the missionary who goes to a different culture and sees no value in learning about the people with whom he or she proposes to share the Gospel. If that is so, it is an unfortunate situation, but one which can be corrected. We can benefit from the work of a growing number of Christians in Canada who are striving to understand and respond to our changing patterns of urbanization, the increasing secularization of our culture and our growing religious pluralism.

The second problem, if I am right, is even more devastating. I fear that we do not see the need to understand our society better because we do not really see ourselves ministering to that culture.

Can it be that we are content merely to understand that portion of our society which is already in the church? Are we primarily concerned with preserving what we have? Or at best, is it our dream only to share the Gospel with people who more or less match the profile of those who are already part of our local congregations? How tragic if the answer is even a qualified yes!

The time for reflection and action is now! A failure by denominations and local congregations to take these realities seriously may mean that the losses from Protestant church attendance in the next 40 years may make even previous declines seem small.

Robert Bernhardt is pastor of Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont.

Christian pastor executed amid new repression in Iran

BRUSSELS, Belgium (WEF) — An Assemblies of God pastor has been executed in Iran amid a new wave of repression against Christian believers and churches in the country. Sources inside Iran report that Hossein Soodmand, 55, an ordained Assemblies of God minister, was hanged December 3 after being tortured during two months of imprisonment.

Soodmand's body was not released for burial. Fellow pastors who visited a prison in Mashad, a city in northeastern Iran, were told of the hanging and were shown a coroner's report stating he was dead. Authorities escorted them to an isolated grave which was not in a cemetery and told them it contained Soodmand's body.

Soodmand was one of a handful of Iranian pastors who had left Islam and accepted the Christian faith. He had been asked by church leaders to move from Mashad to Gorgan, northeast of Tehran, to lead a congregation established there in the 1960s. A church Soodmand served in Mashad was closed by the government in 1988. The pastor has been conducting private meetings since the closing of the Mashad church, but sources said the government knew of them.

Humiliation, torture

When Soodmand arrived in

Gorgan, he was arrested by local authorities, blindfolded and taken away for interrogation, sources said. He was then ordered to leave Gorgan and return to Mashad. Upon arrival back in Mashad, he was arrested again and imprisoned. During the following four weeks, sources said, he was subjected to public mockery for his faith and ordered to repeatedly pray aloud. He also was physically tortured, sources said, but no details were available on the extent. He was released on bail for a time, then re-arrested and imprisoned for another month.

The hanging was reported to have taken place December 3, but reports reached the West a couple of weeks later. Soodmand was accused of spying, a charge dismissed as preposterous by friends who knew him. "He was harmless, a meek man who will be remembered for his quiet spirit," said one man. After becoming a Christian believer, Soodmand began a ministry which spanned 24 years.

He first worked with the Iranian Bible Society as a *colporteur*, selling Bibles across the country. He later worked as an evangelist in a Christian hospital in Isfahan and worked with a mission for the blind. It was there he met his future wife, Mahtab, who is blind. She was allowed to visit

her husband only twice during his imprisonment, and was denied a final meeting with him before the execution, sources said. Since Soodmand's death, sources said, she has suffered a breakdown and is being cared for by church friends. Also surviving are four children, ages 10 to 15.

Retaliation for converting from Islam

Iranian-born Christians in the West who monitor church ministry inside Iran said the Soodmand execution is part of a new, harsher round of systematic repression against believers, especially aimed at believers who are former Muslims. "Now they are willing to kill," said one Iranian Christian leader now living outside Iran. Several believers have disappeared during the past year, sources said, and are feared dead. Mehdi Dibaj, another church leader and ex-Muslim, has been held in prison for more than five years; workers now are more concerned for his fate.

Along with the closing of churches and Christian bookstores, Christian conferences in Iran have been banned and government approval is required for weddings or even church outings. Also, in July, authorities closed down the Iranian Bible Society. They

have warned Iranian Christians not to contact the West.

Although Christianity is one of the four religions officially recognized by the Islamic government of Iran, Iranian Christian leaders outside Iran point out that that recognition in practice includes only several hundred thousand ethnic Armenians and Assyrians — not believers from a Muslim background.

Iran's new repression, these observers say, probably is an effort by the Iranian government to head off increasing response to the Gospel across Iran, they said. Efforts by believers inside Iran,

as well as Christian radio programs broadcast into the country from outside, are being increasingly effective in presenting the Gospel. Pressures from the Iranian government have had the unintended effect of producing more unity among believers and strengthening their witness.

Some Iranians are apparently uncomfortable with their government's repressive measures. Sources said when prison officials were relaying news of Soodmand's execution, one employee wept openly.

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When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particularly obituaries), please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text.

Thank you.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Christian Reformed Church Seminary Student Aid Available

Students of **Classis Niagara** who are preparing for the ordained ministry in the CRC and who are in need of financial aid for 1991-1992 are invited to apply to the Student Fund. For application forms, please contact:

A. Glasbergen, 749 Foss Rd., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0
Phone: (416) 892-3285

Applications for financial assistance must be received by the Student Fund Committee no later than **March 1, 1991.**

Feature

It's a long road back to freedom for Bulgaria's Christians

Janice Broun

In November 1990, the protests of the Bulgarian people were loud enough and serious enough to bring down their first freely-elected government only six months after bringing it into power. In that period, the ruling Bulgarian Socialist Party (the former Communist Party) was unable to curb the country's catastrophic economic crisis.

Today, the new coalition government dominated by the Union of Democratic Forces must try to curb a 10 billion dollar deficit, and the loss of 1.7 billion dollars from its prompt support of the world trade embargo against Iraq. Food shortages are as serious as they are in the Soviet Union. Some 90,000 mainly young people emigrated in 1990 alone.

A new constitution, together with new legislation on religion, is expected to be drawn up this spring. With its ratification, it is expected that Bulgaria's long-repressed religious life will return to a semblance of normality.

During the dark years of communist repression, Bulgaria implemented one of the most aggressive and efficiently implemented anti-religious policies in Eastern Europe. Most were deterred from attending church, and the Christian community was almost completely isolated from mainstream Christian contacts in the West.

Religion was pornography

Religious literature was classified together with pornography. Most of a special edition of 27,500 Bibles provided by the United Bible Societies in the single negotiation (the first since 1924) with the Bulgarian government never reached believers. Six hundred of these designated for the Veliko Turnovo region, for instance, were kept under lock and key at a monastery, and only released to the public in March 1990.

But believers felt all the more isolated and vulnerable because of the failure of the Holy Synod — the bishops of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church — to stand up on their behalf. The Orthodox church represents approximately 6 million adherents, representing about 75 per cent of the Bulgarian population.

Initial demands for basic religious freedoms first surfaced outside the established church, sometime in early 1989. These demands came from a small group of Orthodox believers who formed the Committee for the Defense of Religious Rights and Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values known as *Spaseniye* (Salvation). It was led by the former atomic

physicist and now priest, Father Hristofer Subev. *Spaseniye* also acted on behalf of the 1.6 million Muslims, the 6,000 Jews, and all Christian denominations.

Nevertheless, the Holy Synod condemned it and sent Subev to a monastery, ostensibly to cool off. In the summer of 1990, the government imprisoned him for three months for demanding toleration for Muslim Turks, who were being forced into complete assimilation.

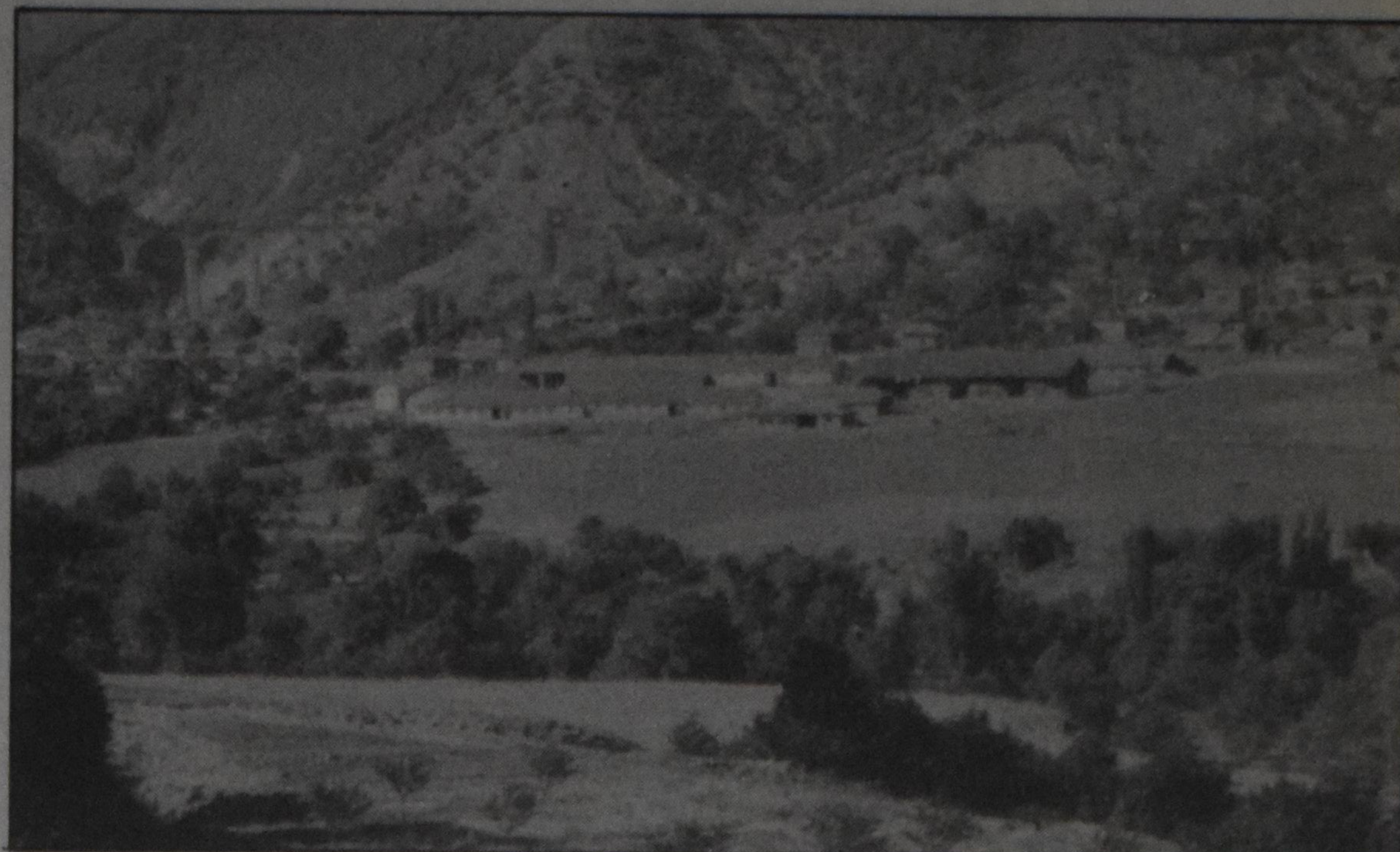
After his release, he worked to maintain a high profile for religious freedom demands, organizing religious rallies with banners like "A Bible in Every Home," and he became vice-chairman of the Union of Democratic Forces, the leading political opposition group. A slightly-built, delicately-featured man in his early 40s, Subev admitted in a fall 1990 interview with NNI, "Standing up in one place with all those banners was a very strange experience."

Expedient move?

When the Holy Synod realized the old political order was crumbling, it quickly changed tack, borrowed much of *Spaseniye*'s program and presented it to the heads of state. It was the first time in 40 years that the synod had spoken up for the rights of believers. In the summer of 1990, six bishops publicly retracted their condemnation of Subev and the Committee, apologized for their mistaken assessment and begged for forgiveness.

Whether this act of repentance was genuine or merely tactical is unclear. The general consensus of the Orthodox intellectuals and a Baptist pastor, who spoke with NNI in Sofia, was that despite these acts the people still do not trust the hierarchy. Their critics would like to see most of the hierarchy resign and be replaced by new bishops, including perhaps Subev, who, as a monk, is eligible. "Our episcopate is a closed shop," commented Sofia University philosophy professor Stephan Penov.

Understandably, within the establishment, there is still considerable opposition to Subev. A suave, handsome priest at Sveta Nedelya, Sofia's city-centre church, scoffed derisively, "Subev is a fool." Inevitably, the communist establishment has done its utmost to blacken his name. As late as October 1990, Keston College reported that Subev had received death threats. In an interview with NNI just prior to the threats, Subev said, "The position I hold in the church is not important so long as the ideals I propose are



Bulgarian countryside

Photo: The World Book Encyclopedia

"During the dark years of communist repression, Bulgaria implemented one of the most aggressive and efficiently implemented anti-religious policies in Eastern Europe."

accepted."

There is no doubt that the subservience of the hierarchy to the regime, its neglect of the church's statutes, and its compromises in pursuit of power, has fostered apathy, moral decay and corruption, and has rendered the church almost incapable of responding to the unprecedented needs of a nation in search of its roots and its faith.

Link to history

And yet, because the Orthodox church represents a vital link with Bulgaria's past, playing a key role in the development of its language, script, culture and education — indeed, its very nationhood — many are looking to it for help in restoring the religious and moral values which they believe are a prerequisite for national recovery. The question is whether it has sufficient human and material resources to respond to the challenge.

In general, the standards for the clergy are quite low. Bob Hoare, a Keston College researcher, was told by reliable sources that the establishment had only recruited unsuitable people. Other sources confirmed to NNI that the church was known to have accepted candidates, including unbelievers, for seminary training who had been rejected by other institutions.

Admittedly, visiting of parishioners' homes and other pastoral work was strongly discouraged by the communists, and this forced most priests into narrow roles limited to little more than performing services. Today,

after years of pressure to accept state-promoted substitute secular rites of passage, clerics are in high demand and doing well financially. In Plovdiv, for instance, some parishioners complained that priests are so busy performing weddings and baptisms that some are reluctant to perform funerals. Teacher Hristina Keranova recounted the case of an elderly woman who was distraught because she could not get a priest to say the required memorial prayers — the *panakhida*, after her husband's death.

Stifling state

During the five centuries of Turkish political and Greek ecclesiastical domination, the monasteries played a vital role in maintaining educational standards and national identity. Today, however, they are at a low ebb because of years of state control. There are less than 200 monks and nuns servicing 120 convents, and even they are ill-equipped to explain the faith to the pilgrims and tourists who visit the sites. Unlike monasteries in the Soviet Union, they have no *startzy* or elders of proven holiness and wisdom, who attract pilgrims by their sermons and spiritual discernment.

Despite all this, and also because of the fact that services are in antique Bulgarian, which even well-educated people can hardly understand, signs of renewal are blossoming. There is a great openness toward religion in reaction to the enforced atheistic materialism of the past. Students are said to

be revolted by communist ideology. New syllabi are being compiled at universities to include a religious dimension.

Over the last year many young people like Marieta Pencheva, a Sofia theological student, and her husband are revitalizing the Orthodox church, having made new commitments to Christ. The Orthodox seminary has now been permitted to move from Tcherepich back to Sofia, while a second one at Plovdiv has been reopened. The Sofia Theological Institute, the rector of which, the monk Neophyt, is highly regarded, has been opened to women after a 40-year ban. Competition for the 60 full-time and 60 part-time spaces is fierce.

Catholics, Protestants held fast

Roman Catholics number approximately 50,000 and Protestants just under 30,000. During the years of communism their seminaries, publishing houses, religious institutions and properties had no legal status. Despite this, their role in upholding the faith went far beyond their numerical proportion. For this they are greatly admired and have an excellent reputation for their integrity in refusing all government subsidies; as well as for their steadfast witness under persecution, of which they bore the brunt of the years of repression.

So severe was the persecution that the Roman Catholic Church was in danger of losing all of its priests. Only 30 survived, compared to a total of 155 in 1948, and only four of

these are under 50 years old. Many died in prison. The government also prevented any ordinations for a period of 15 years. Candidates studying privately with bishops were kept under surveillance and routinely threatened. Two young priests who were interviewed by NNI were allowed to train in Rome in 1981, but when they returned their entire stock of theological books was confiscated.

One of the priests, chubby and jocular Georgi Iovchev, became bishop of Plovdiv in 1988, while still under age 40, making him the youngest bishop in Europe.

Only nine left

The church also suffered much during the early 1980s, when Bulgaria was accused of involvement in the assassination attempt on the Pope. "There used to be 70 priests in my diocese," Iovchev told NNI. "Now there are only nine, and most of them are very old. They have 20 churches to look after. Seven boys have just gone to Rome to study for the priesthood [because] we haven't enough priests here to run a seminary.

"We want to do big things, and to build churches. We need more aid from the West than just a car and a few books. Today we are [legally] recognized. [Still], convent life is impossible because they have confiscated all our property. So we have started a new order of plainclothes lay sisters who visit homes and help out," Iovchev said.

Iovchev spoke with NNI in the presence of a gang of giggling teenagers, just after baptizing two teenage boys from atheist families. "Previously," he said, "we had few young people, [and] we weren't allowed to catechize." He failed to mention that at times the pressure on the church was so severe that he was forced to cut all contact with visitors and parishioners.

First 'evangelical culture centre'

The number of Protestants is increasing at such a rapid pace that many Protestant church structures are planning new construction or have already completed necessary expansions. With the establishment of the Philadelphia complex in Veliko Turnovo, known as the first evangelical cultural centre in the Balkans, the Protestants' seminary problems should be solved. The 3,000-acre complex is designed for religious education; and includes a library, concert hall and cafeteria — all funded by evangelical organizations abroad.

Pentecostal Ventreslava Kovatcheva, a student convert,

enthusiastically proclaimed, "It will serve as [a] Pentecostal centre for the whole of Bulgaria, well [situated] to help and encourage our smaller churches here in the north."

Pentecostals are feeling the competition from well-financed Western denominations, particularly that of the prosperity-theology-centred Word of Life organization from Upsala, Sweden. Kovatcheva deplores its doctrine, as does Pencheva, who before her conversion to the Orthodox church, was put off embracing Christianity by what she labelled the simplistic hollowness of this group.

Vasa, a Western gospel rock group, has also been criticized by Baptist Svetanka Svilenova and Orthodox Elizaveta Milenova for the lack of Gospel content in its music. Todor Angelov, pastor of Sofia's Baptist church, said Baptists are not seriously concerned with the influx of foreign sects or unfamiliar denominations.

Cordial relations

Relations between the various church groupings are cordial. Orthodox student Pencheva spoke admiringly of Baptist efforts to conduct personal evangelism on city streets.

"Our relations with the Orthodox are very good," stressed Catholic Bishop Iovchev.

But there are also criticisms. Protestants have considerable reservations about the Orthodox synod — but so do most Orthodox. According to Orthodox Konstantin Adjarov, leader of the Christian Republican Party, the Pentecostal Church of God is deeply admired.

Several of the new religious associations are also ecumenical. Christian Brotherhood has renounced proselytizing among its member groups, and says it is striving for inter-church co-operation in activities such as summer camps, the printing of a newspaper, and musical efforts.

The Christian Women's Association, whose president is Orthodox Milanova, speaker of the Christian Republican Party, has as its goal the restoration of Christian family values, environmental responsibility, adequate housing, and proper wages to enable women to stay home with the children, if they so chose.

"Most girls," Milanova told NNI, "want more than one or two children that are the norm. Abortion isn't a problem, family planning is effective."

Some Protestants, however, fear a renewed dominance by the Orthodox church, claiming they could face discrimination similar to that facing

evangelicals in Romania. But Father Subev dismissed their fears, saying, "Bulgaria is not Romania, and we've had no troubles between denominations either earlier or now."

Christian/Muslim conflicts 'manufactured'

Overall, Bulgarians seem to be a tolerant people. Sofia University professor Penov said he believed the alleged conflict between Muslims and Christians was manufactured by the communists to divert attention away from themselves.

"Muslims are no problem at all; they are peaceful, hard-working agriculturalists. We are very friendly with them," Penov affirmed.

Muslims interviewed in Sofia said they were not interested in an autonomous Muslim region. Pentecostals Kovatcheva and Petko Usunov said that in some towns and villages where congregations are comprised of high percentages of former Muslims, there are no formal mission outreach efforts. "They just come. When one member of a family is converted, usually the entire family comes. We also have some gypsy congregations. In

almost all of our congregations there is at least one gypsy."

Many of those surveyed by NNI said their most urgent need is for Bibles, religious literature and printing paper. Apart from the United-Bible-Societies-sponsored 1981-1982 edition, practically no Bibles were printed in the past 45 years, and those that were never reached believers. Doubting whether a promised consignment of 300,000 Orthodox Bibles would actually materialize, many pleaded with this reporter for Bibles in any language. Practically all confessed they owed a great debt to the Protestants, who at great personal risk had smuggled Bibles into the country, their own personal copies included.

Protestants, however, are adamant in their rejection of the Orthodox version of the Bible. As such, the United Bible Societies is printing 35,000 copies acceptable to Protestants; and discussions concerning a new ecumenical translation are slated to begin in the spring of 1991.

Bishop Iovchev reports plans to print Catholic New Testaments in Bulgaria in the near future. And Orthodox Adjarov said he believed cheaply produced pocket-sized Gospels would be of most use at

present to distribute among new enquirers. "People," he said, "are very credulous, ready to fall prey to bogus, para-psychical faiths, so it is a matter of extreme urgency."

Milenova stressed the need to print basic explanatory material because people are "so ignorant." Kovatcheva pointed out that religious booklets printed in the West in Bulgarian are not always well translated and often are full of grammatical errors.

Organizations are desperate for newsprint to launch their own journals and periodicals. "We have everything ready to print; we could use 20 tons of newsprint on a paper for Spaseniye," Father Subev said.

Bulgarian Christians stand at a crossroads, ready to take advantage of unequalled opportunities, but they will have to rely on the West to provide the tools to help rebuild their infrastructures. Meanwhile, the economic situation worsens. Adjarov warned, "There is nothing here. How much longer can people bear it, especially when the cold comes?"

Janice Broun is Eastern Europe correspondent for News Network International (NNI).



"There is a great openness toward religion in reaction to the enforced atheistic materialism of the past."

Photo: Call Them Canadians

Christian witness

How much do you know about the church down the street?:

A proposal for discovering your church neighbours

Gerald Vandezande
Christians belonging to different denominational backgrounds and theological traditions are increasingly working together in various ways to achieve certain public justice goals (such as life-protecting laws for the unborn or legal equality rights in education). Others engage in community outreach to minister to the personal needs of battered women and handicapped children. We seek to do so in the Spirit of Christ and out of a communal concern for the human right to life and well-being of vulnerable neighbours.
These co-operative efforts are increasingly bearing fruit. It is encouraging that our governments and some media begin to pay more attention to what we Christians believe and advocate. As well, our communities and our neighbours are getting a clearer idea of who we are and why we seek to be of Christian service in all areas of life.
These ecumenical activities have also served to bring those involved in Christian political service and community outreach closer together — not only in our respect for each other's dedication and service, but also in our understanding of each other's faith and vision.



Photo: C.C. files
Gerald Vandezande

This spiritual growth has certainly been the case of the people active in Agincourt Ecumenical Ministries (AEM). AEM is a Gospel-motivated organization made up of representatives from nine participating Agincourt, Ont.-area churches. Its purpose is to explore the need for and, when possible, to engage in Christian ministries which seek to meet

personal and community needs.
I have been richly blessed and greatly encouraged by my Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, United and other Christian friends. They have given me a broader and deeper sense of the Body of Christ!
At recent meetings of AEM, we considered various ways of reaching out more effectively to all our neighbours in Agincourt. We very much want to establish more meaningful relationships with them, so that we can develop a deeper sense of community and fellowship in Christ and a greater influence for the common good.
We reflected on the growth in ecumenical activity among the Agincourt churches and the possibility for more co-operative efforts rooted in the unity we enjoy in the Gospel.
We've seen our unity expressed in annual co-operative Palm Sunday and Advent worship services and during a Lenten Bible Study series. Through these gatherings and at the meetings of AEM, we experience our oneness in Christ as we prayerfully seek God's coming kingdom of love, justice, peace and righteousness.
We believe that this oneness can and must be deepened and that our fellowship can and must be strengthened — not only among those who are active in the Agincourt Ministerial Association and

AEM, but also among all our other church members.
We unanimously agreed to invite the Ministerial Association and the local churches to reflect with us on possible ways of further growing together in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and in the fellowship and practice of the Gospel.
We Reformed are not alone
We have proposed what we tentatively call an ecumenical "Discovering Your Neighbour" series. These would be monthly gatherings at which we would get to know each of the participating churches much better: their *raison-d'être*, their members, their confession, their mission, their program, their outreach to the community and their worship.
In other words, the focus of the evening would be to become more personally acquainted with (1) the kind of churches they — Agincourt's Christ Lutheran, St. Bartholomew's, St. Timothy's *et al* — are or seek to become; (2) their Christian witness and work in the neighbourhood and the larger community; and (3) how they would like to grow and expand their Christian outreach and service in Agincourt.
Each church community would inform us about its makeup and mission, what makes it a unique part of the Body of Christ and how it seeks to be of service to our God and neighbours here in Agincourt and beyond. This would include a brief question-and-answer period, a time of worship, and conclude with fellowship and refreshments afterwards.
The entire evening, including the worship service, would be the responsibility of each church. It could choose its own way of sharing what its presence in its community is all about and what it, by the grace of God, seeks to be and do for others.
We think this will result in a greater appreciation for each other's understanding of the Gospel, sense of mission and style of worship. And out of that we hope will develop deeper fellowship in Christ and stronger ecumenical activities in the service of God and neighbour.
This proposal was discussed at two meetings of AEM. We then shared it with all the members of the ministerial,

along with the request that they and the other leaders in our churches give it careful consideration and share with us their evaluation and suggestions for possible improvement of our proposal. The initial response has been favourable.
We look forward to receiving the benefit of their advice as to how we Christians and our churches can increasingly become a more united community and a greater healing presence in our community in the way we serve and worship together in the Spirit of Christ according to the Gospel.
We would welcome your suggestions or comments, especially how you stimulate Christian unity through education, worship and outreach in your community.
"... So that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21).

Gerald Vandezande is the public affairs director of Citizens for Public Justice, the convener of Agincourt Ecumenical Ministries and a member of the Grace Christian Reformed Church in Agincourt, Ont.

Church News can be found on page 18 ...

— ATTENTION —

Consistories are urged to make use of qualified seminarians from Mid-America Reformed Seminary for work in their congregation during the summer of 1991.

Please contact the
Director of the Ministerial Apprenticeship Program
Mid-America Reformed Seminary
Box 163, Orange City, IA 51041
(712) 737-3446

Poetry

Deadline

That Tuesday on my calendar,
circled in red,
fifteenth of January,
deadline —
the hollow words I read
have all been said
long, long ago
and many times before —
fifteenth of January,
will you leave us
this sad semblance of peace
or lead us to (have mercy, Lord)
the depths of hate and
devastation once again?
deadline —
the cheerful chirping in
my willow tree
reminds me of the children far away,
still playing happy games
of yesterday
in dusty streets —
deadline —
the prayers for peace
cry with the candlelight,
"Deliver us,
deliver us from evil,"
and angels sigh
because we are so blind:
we will be losers,
even when we win —

†††††
deadline, *stand still*
between us and the darkness,
too well I know
that when the horror starts,
we'll do forever
what you tried to tell us:
gather the dead
the dead
the dead
the

Prayer

Upon observing POWs on television
When we are perplexed
by world events,
when the images that appear
on our television screens
fill us with terror and despair
so that we can no longer bear it,
then, let us turn off our sets, Lord,
and turn to *you* instead —
in constant prayer
for a solution
to end this devastating war.

Come back quickly, Lord Jesus!
Didy Prinzen
Oshawa, Ont.

January 14, 1991
Tini Van Ameyde
Edmonton



Linking spirituality, vision and service (8)

Spirituality and interpersonal relationships

Marian Van Til
In the previous article in this series Arda Ringnald Rooks suggested that we should think of spirituality as our connectedness to God. It will be helpful to keep that concept in mind when we consider how our spirituality links us to who we are as men and women and how we relate to other men and women: spouses, as persons involved in non-married romantic relationships, and as friends — men to men, women to women, and women and men to each other.

Of course there is an overtly sexual aspect to our being men and women. But our male or female gender permeates our *whole* being: under normative circumstances, we *think* like a woman or a man; we approach problems like a woman or man; and thus, we relate to others — of same and opposite gender — like the woman or man that we are.

Our maleness and femaleness make us truly complementary beings in all parts of our lives, not just in terms of sexual intercourse. Those gender differences balance who we are as human beings — or at least God intends that they should.

But with the Fall, that exquisite complementariness went askew. The resulting distortions have plagued us ever since.

We lost true knowledge of who we are as men and women, of how, before the Fall, we related as *partners*.

Thus, girls and women suffer under usurped male power, made less-than rather than partners-with; men and boys suffer from psychological manipulation by women and girls fighting domination; and neither gender is able to agree much on just what women should be, what men should be and how we should be and act together. Where there had been only the most intrinsic kind of understanding, there are craters left by huge comprehension gaps.

Men band together with other men, and women with women in mostly futile attempts to find peace, to be

understood. While there is a place in specific instances for groups of men alone and groups of women alone, on the whole, one-gender groups or organizations often suffer from that Fall-induced gender imbalance, from emphasizing only one side of the human equation. Thus the imbalanced reasoning of all-male run governments and other societal “power structures,” all-female (or male) professions, all-male or -female clubs, etc.

Enter: grace

Into that gender abyss comes Christian spirituality — spirituality which *connects* where we were disconnected, and which develops in us the gift of faith, which in Christ has the power to set right those gender distortions, to rearrange crooked relationships, to re-establish male-female partnership.

If anywhere in human society, the church, as nurturer of spirituality, must be the purveyor of male-female harmony — in its own organization and government, in its healing message about relationships to its members in all parts of life.

The church that emphasizes a biblical spirituality and whose members pray and work to live out of such a spirituality will become more and more a model for balanced, life-giving relationships between men and women: a haven for the sexually abused, and (urging repentance) for the abuser; a shelter for those suffering marriage battle fatigue; an oasis for the gender confused,

for those whose conflicting feelings make them question their gender “orientation”; for women suffering discrimination because God created them women; for men who aren’t sure what masculinity really means; for all who experience the pain of being imprisoned by gender stereotypes; and for those who are pretty comfortable being who they are.

In the church it must be possible for men to relate to each other deeply and without fear; for women and men to work together as partners and friends; for single people of both genders to be allowed to nurture friendships with other people of both genders, appreciated for who and what they are, regardless of marital status; for husbands and wives to gain biblical direction for being complementary mates; for boys and girls to play and share together without superior/inferior feelings for their own or the other’s gender.

Wholeness can be realized

I have experienced the joyful results that a lived, biblical spirituality can have on gender relationships in a Christian community. Beginning some 10 years ago I lived for periods of time in three different co-ed homes with several single men and women and (in one case) a married couple sharing a home together. We were all guided by a spirituality which erased gender-related distortions. While we, like any friends, had our disagreements, minor and major, all of us experienced tremendous growth and wholeness in our relationships with members of the other gender.

It was the most satisfying period in my life as a single person. That biblically inspired gender balance allowed us to be

the *whole* men and women we were meant to be, “partners” quite apart from any “sexual” behaviour or relationships. That balance needs to be able to be achieved in other ways as well.

A biblical spirituality in marriage puts male “headship” and female “footship,” as my husband wryly calls it, into proper perspective. It assures that husband and wife will be (or strive to be) partners in all sense of the word — and as they go, partners with God. It nudges too-dependent wives to examine their unique personhood, to use whatever talents God has given them, at home or wherever they are suited to be used. It prevents too-dominant husbands from being overpowering, from “lording it over” their wives, preventing them from using their talents to be all God wants them to be.

Casting out fear

The irony is that we Christians too often allow devil-initiated gender distortions to short-circuit our spirituality; and we even defend some of them as God-ordained. Too often I have been allowed more room from non-Christians to be the woman God gave me the gifts to be than I have been allowed from within the Christian community. When our spirituality is permitted no link — or a twisted link — to who

we are as sexually created human beings, fears, distrust, distortion and, yes, discrimination, are quick to insinuate themselves.

What we Christians, women and men, must do first to start becoming the true partners God wants us to be is to “cast out fear.” But to do that we must acknowledge that, for many of us, our relationships with people of the other gender *are* fraught with *fear* — fear of loss of control, of being dominated, of inciting anger (or even violence), of societal changes, of having to change *our* attitudes, and thus perhaps even our lifestyles.

We need to admit that male-female relationships is one area of life in which we Reformed people (who like to say, rather proudly, that our faith affects all areas of life) have not done a great job.

But that’s where our faith, our spirituality — our connectedness to God and then to others — can save us. It is *faith* that casts out fear. Christ alone will truly dispel fear, will allow us to be vulnerable (as he was in his relationships to both women and other men), to change — and then to cope with the consequences. Let’s pray earnestly that he will do that, and truly desire that for which we pray.

Marian Van Til is acting editor of Calvinist Contact, a church musician and theological librarian, and has a special interest in gender-related topics.

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Environment/Issues

Illegal market a threat to Canada's bears

(Canadian Scene) — Wildlife officers in several Canadian provinces say the illegal killing of wild animals to supply the international trade in animal parts is steadily increasing.

Conservationists around the

world are also alarmed at the decline of several animal populations — some to the brink of extinction — because of this international demand.

Two examples of such species are the African elephant and the North American black

bear. The elephant is desirable for its ivory tusks while the black bear is sought for its gall bladder and claws.

The demand for bear gall bladders has caused an acute scarcity of Asian black bears in both Japan and Korea. Wildlife managers say they don't want the same type of thing to happen to the North American black bear. So far, the species does not face the same peril.

paws crudely hacked off.

Bear gall bladders are dried and ground into a powder then taken as a remedy to relieve pain and inflammation. Bear claws are sought as jewellery.

Black bears reproduce slowly. An adult female does not reproduce until age six, then produces an average of about one cub a year. At that rate, the species is very vulnerable to overhunting.

Biologists estimate there are approximately 200,000 black bears in North America. But in certain areas of the United States, the species faces extinction.

To protect species of wildlife at risk the Ontario government has legislation to prohibit the sale or purchase of most game animals and their parts.

Under a new law, the only parts of black bear, deer, moose and caribou which are legal to sell or purchase are hides from black bear, deer and moose, and cast antlers (naturally shed) from deer, moose and caribou.

The ministry will continue to enforce the prohibition against the sale or purchase of any other game parts, including bear gall bladders.

There are also open seasons for hunting black bear, which must be strictly followed. In addition, it is prohibited to shoot cubs, female bears accompanied by cubs in the spring, or any bear in a den or at a waste disposal site.

Canadian heads the 1992 World Conference on Environment

Diana Grier Ayton

(Canadian Scene) — He doesn't look like anyone's idea of a superhero, but environmental advocate Maurice Strong is fighting to save our planet. A man with a mild manner and somewhat rumpled appearance, he visited Montreal's McGill University recently to deliver a lecture.

"There is nothing less at risk here than the future of our planet as a sustainable home for our species. Our whole society is based on the values of economic success and indulgence. No society has succeeded for long with this philosophy," Strong told students.

Though he carries a grim message, Strong does see progress being made. "When I first convened a meeting of climatologists in 1973" he said, "there was a lot of controversy about the scientific evidence. Now there is a tremendous degree of scientific consensus on what we have to do."

No fad

Manitoba-born Maurice Strong has served as president of Petro-Canada and the Power Corporation. When he began to talk about his concern for the environment, some of his business colleagues regarded his involvement as a fad.

Almost two decades later, Strong is still convening meetings on the environment. He is secretary general of the Rio de Janeiro Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992. The conference was called for by the United Nations. Strong's conference board of directors is made up of representatives of 160 nations.

"We've gained a lot of experience since 1972," he says. That was the date of the first UN conference on the environment in Stockholm. "What is different about the 1992 conference is that it will be attended by the highest leaders of government, representing almost every country in the world."

Though he is optimistic, Strong is not naive. "I think the biggest stumbling block is the reluctance of nations to take the tough decisions that will be required. We have to change the idea that in development there is always a conflict between the environment and

the economy, and that one always has to lose. It's a question of how to combine the two."

Another stumbling block will no doubt arise on the question of providing aid to Third World countries. Strong says that industrialized nations must be willing to make available to developing countries the additional resources they will need to incorporate the environmental component into their economies. "Without the resources and technology they need, they can't continue to develop without tremendous pressures on the environment." Is an international tax an idea whose time has come? "That may be the way to go. It's never been politically realistic before."

Must cut waste

Canadians will have to become more efficient energy users. "We're among the most wasteful energy consumers in the world. We have a little excuse with our weather and long distances, but not enough to justify it. We showed a little bit of commitment in the earlier energy crisis, but we receded from that very quickly."

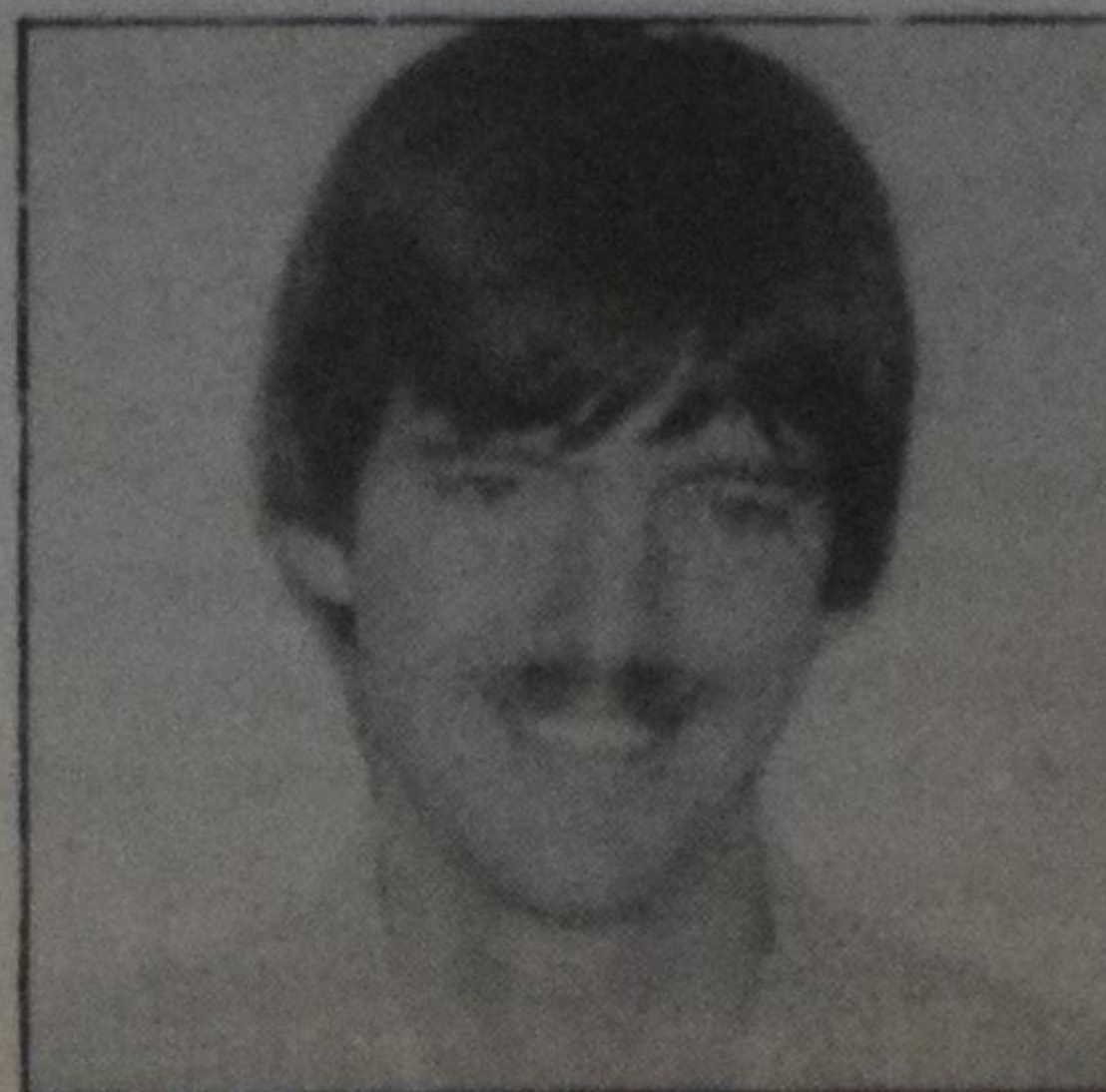
The Japanese, meanwhile, have reduced the amount of energy required per unit of production by 40 per cent. They have embraced the concept of changing consumption habits and it has given them a competitive edge in production costs. According to Strong, Canadian and American industry have on the whole reacted defensively to pressure to reduce consumption and emissions.

Despite his global vision, Strong still says that there is no act of conservation too small, whether it's writing on both sides of a piece of paper or using lids on cooking pots. "As countries, as institutions and as individuals, we must examine what we are doing to add to the problem. If each one of us makes a small effort, and that is multiplied by millions, it will make a difference."

Big or small, if we don't make changes by the end of this century, Strong warns that we may be too late. "We have to draw up a Magna Carta for the earth in 1992. If we delay until the next century, there could be nothing left but a salvage operation."

Primitive

In Ontario over the past few years wildlife officers have found an increasing number of black bears killed illegally, just for their claws and gall bladders. Sometimes carcasses are left to rot with their gall bladders removed and their



Syd Hielema

War and prayer

Last Sunday evening the Gulf War entered our church in an unusual way. We were hosting an ecumenical service for the churches of Newmarket (Ontario) and it was a time for prayer during which everyone was invited to participate.

One gentleman stood up and thanked the Lord that both Mulroney and Bush had consulted with David Mains and Billy Graham before going to war, and then prayed that the Lord would bless the efforts of the politicians to restore justice in the Middle East. The next four prayers after this one all subtly "preached" against his by asking the Lord to remember all victims of bombing and also to help us to distinguish between spiritual and military warfare.

This quiet confrontation during an ecumenical prayer time brought into focus my own spiritual confusion concerning the war. During the past few weeks I have found praying about the war to be very difficult. Somehow the combination of what's actually happening (which no one really seems to know), the way it is being reported, and the way it is affecting us folks back in North America forces one to deal with some significant spiritual issues.

No clear-cut case

I find it impossible to pray for an allied victory. The politicians and, to quite an extent, the press present the war as a clear case of justice against injustice, often citing the obvious comparison between Hussein and Hitler to reinforce the point. The public, which loves to target figures that are easy to hate (remember Ghaddafi and Idi Amin?), eats it all up and never bothers to investigate history a little more closely to discover that:

(a) even though Hussein had no business swallowing up his neighbour, he does have some legitimate grievances;

(b) there are significant differences between Hitler 1939 and Hussein 1991 (in terms of other options available, how far the situation had deteriorated and balance of power between opposing forces) which reduce comparisons to

propaganda;

(c) the U.S. has this funny habit of not caring a bit about justice when a lack of justice serves American interests.

Christians, who rightly have a strong sense of justice, easily forget that in the Bible justice never exists as an abstract concept to be fought for in and of itself. If it did, the heart would have gone out of Christianity and all one is left with is self-righteous legalism which, in effect, removes the cross from the church and raises the allied flag instead. What is our only comfort?

Spiritually dark times

I pray that the war will be very short and will result in as little violence as possible. I pray, and doubt greatly, Hussein (at least, according to the Western press) appears to be a religious fanatic who will gladly sacrifice his entire nation to the cause. Bush, someone remarked recently, isn't strong enough to allow Hussein an opportunity to save face, and, therefore, is compelled to continue until there's no blood left to spill.

I pray too that the North American church will not easily slip into the popular good guys/bad guys mentality. The allied cause may be more just, but that does not excuse press reports which either encourage high-tech weaponry as a new idol to trust in or else use it to revive flagging faith in that old idol, Western Civilization (whose revival seems to fit perfectly with the resurgence of racism all over the Western world).

In all the hoopla of war let's not forget that these are spiritually dark times. War brings out in people almost nothing but characteristics that are diametrically opposed to the way of the Spirit as it is variously described in the New Testament. Watching and responding to the Gulf news without a posture of prayer is spiritual foolishness.

Syd Hielema studies at the Toronto School of Theology.

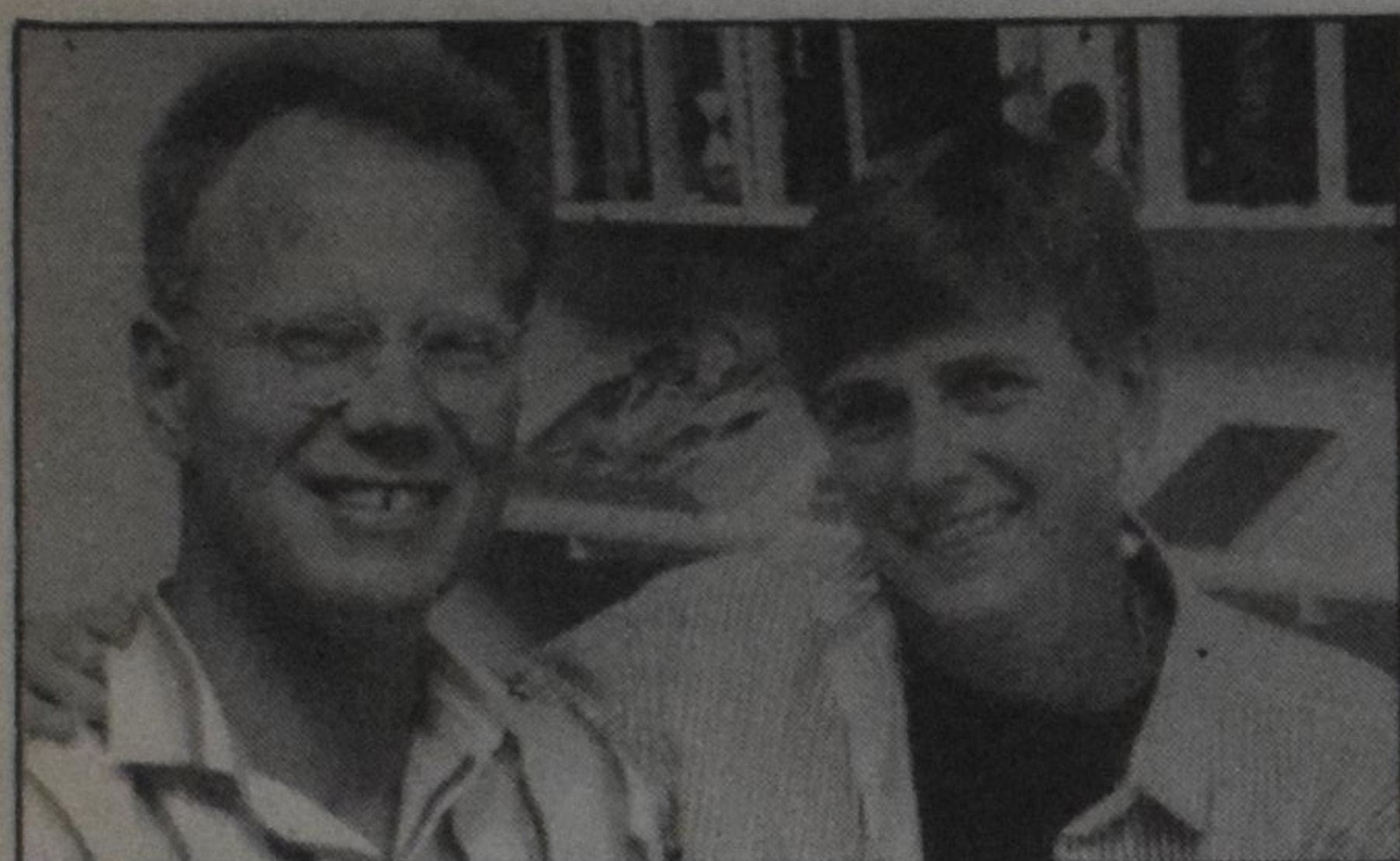


Photo: David Van Dyke

Peter and Marja are



Dear Readers:

This is the third and last column dealing with the way separated and divorced persons have been treated in the church.

Dear P & M:

A year after my wife died I attended a singles conference where I met many divorced and widowed people. Prior to going, my elder warned me that his friend had been to such a conference and came home very disappointed. A little while later my brother-in-law asked me how I would handle being exposed to so many divorced people?

When I arrived, I was initially overwhelmed by the large gathering of singles at this event. Suddenly I heard my name called over the crowd. It was my cousin who had gone through a divorce eight years earlier. I had not seen her in all that time and here was my first "exposure" to a divorcee; a person who ran up to me, gave me a big hug and made me feel welcome! After several hours of talking with her about everything she helped me realize that we must go on with life.

In the spring I attended another conference. In a workshop a woman complained about how the singles were treated or ignored in their home churches. The leader challenged us to make our feelings known to the church leaders and to form our own support groups.

I accepted that challenge and suggested to my consistory that we form a singles fellowship. They told me to put my request in writing, which I did. My mention of divorced persons who would join this group generated a strong reaction. Many of the elders felt that we could not let divorced people into our church! My biblical argument that Jesus ministered to the Samaritan woman who was divorced many times convinced them to let me give it a chance.

Later, at a congregational meeting, all groups were asked to give a report on their activities. Representing the singles fellowship I explained what we did and our reason for existing. After the meeting I was approached by one of our pious concerned members. He insisted that we may not allow divorced people into our church. He argued that the Bible says divorce is unacceptable under any circumstances. Of course, there was no point in arguing with him any further.

After two years our group died out. Now my church's consistory is spending all its energy on the women's ordination issue and has given notice that it wants to separate from our denomination if its synod does not reverse its [positive] stand. Once again the church is arguing and being divided. I have come to the point where I think that the more pious the membership is, the harder it works for the devil in destroying the church of Christ. I would never leave my church. But believe me, sometimes it gets very difficult!

Dear P & M:

After 25 years of marital misery to a man who never grew up I left with only my children and a box of clothes. The deacons came to visit, offering me money and a place to live. Little did I know the reason for their kindness, namely, to get my husband and me back together.

The minister came every week insisting that I go back to my husband. Each time I refused

and each time he left me in tears. I finally told him I was getting a divorce if that's what it took to get him off my back. That was the end of any church contact and no one ever visited again. I felt totally abandoned by God.

Then I met a wonderful man whose wife had left him for another man, taking the kids with her. He was devastated and tried for two years to get his kids back.

Why he bothered with me I'll never know. He was decent, clean-living and knew I was on the wrong track. After going together for two years we decided to marry and the church promptly put him under censorship. They were very cruel and I became very bitter.

Slowly, slowly he started going back to church. Some of my kids started going with him and, lo and behold, I found myself going along once in a while. After about a year I became a Christian. I had always been a good "church person," but this was different. Today I'm happier than I have ever been in my life. My husband is an elder in the same church that caused so much heartache, I'm involved in Coffee Break and my children are all Christians.

All of this took place a number of years ago. I think the church is much better today at handling my kind of case.

I really enjoy your column. You are doing a wonderful thing. People have to know about the hurting people in our churches. I always thought church people were so perfect, with perfect families. Now I know that that's not the case and it actually makes me feel better about my church.

We still have a long way to go, but things are changing.

Dear Readers:

The letters you have read from divorced or remarried persons were revised and condensed versions of what we received. Each person had the courage to send name and address, trusting us to change vital information that might be used against them. One person apologized for "pouring this all out on you." Another hoped that we could make sense of all that she wrote since "it is hard to put your experience into words."

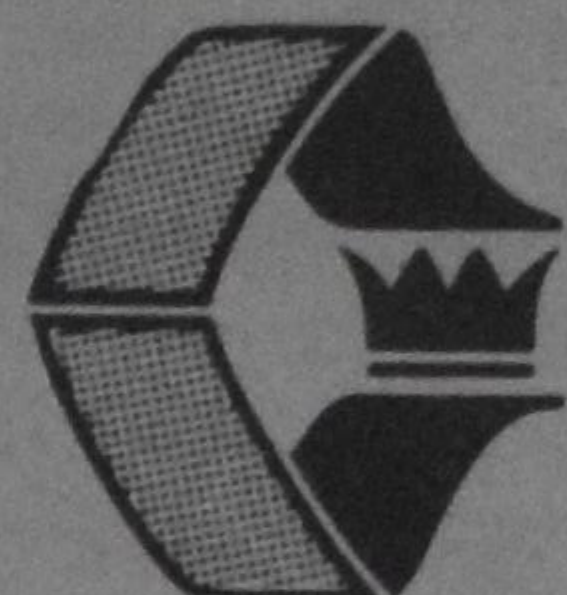
We believe that each writer was extremely helpful in opening our ears, eyes and HEARTS to the pain, failure, frustration and imperfection that lives in the church of Christ and in us all. We were especially struck by two things: God's tenacious grip on those who have known such turmoil and the heartfelt professions of faith expressed in each letter.

Write to:
P & M
c/o Calvinist Contact
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl and Marian Van Til.

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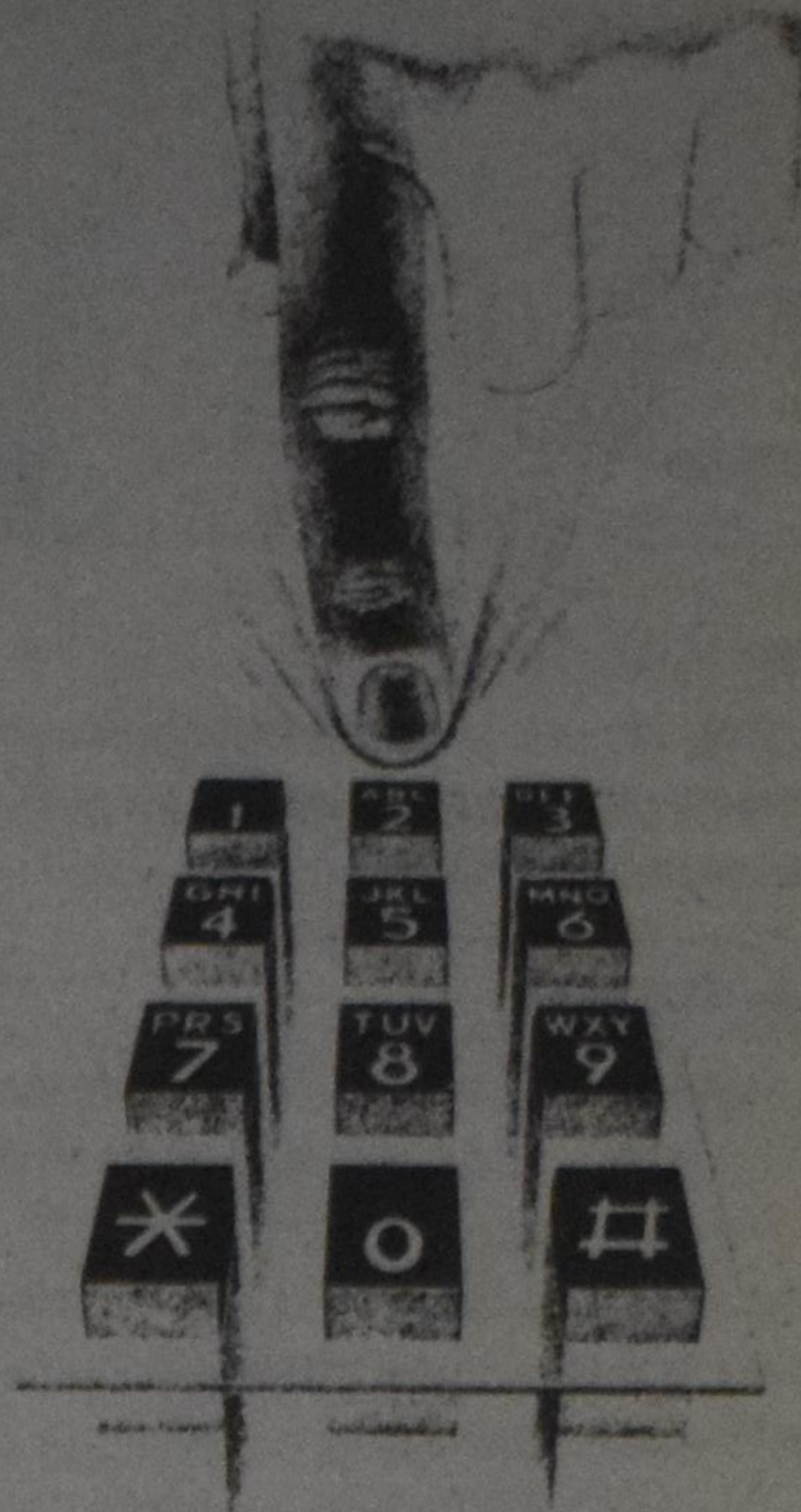
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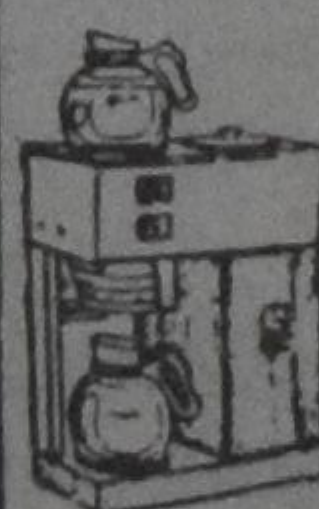


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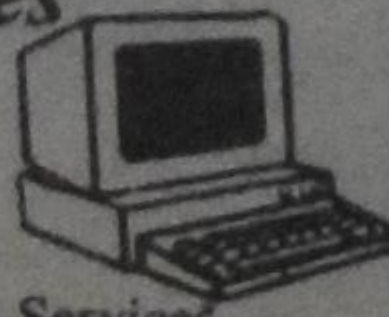
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A sheet with information sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>LONGER CLASSIFIEDS: The rate shown above for classifieds ads covers any length up to six column inches. <i>Calvinist Contact</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST inclusive).</p> <p>PHOTOS: Photographs sent by fax are <i>not acceptable</i>. If you wish a photo included, send us the original!</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS</p> <p>Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in <i>Calvinist Contact</i> will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$20.00 (GST inclusive)! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$20.00 and the couple's future address.</p> <p>Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd. 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone (416) 682-8311 Fax (416) 682-8313</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Florence Veenstra-Vander Graaf on the occasion of her 80th birthday!</i></p> <p>VEENSTRA:</p> <p>Op har tachtichste jierdei wolle wy us Mem yn it syntse sette...! (which, interpreted, means: "Happy 80th birthday Grandma!")</p> <p>FLORENCE VEENSTRA-VANDER GRAAF</p> <p>Feb. 16, 1991.</p> <p>2 White St., Bldg. "A," Apt. 105, St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z2</p> <p>Ted & Tina — St. Catharines</p> <p>Dorothy & Rien — Zeist, the Neth.</p> <p>John & Lise — Mississauga</p> <p>Jack & Ike — Drayton</p> <p>Fred & Hazel — Owen Sound</p> <p>Bill & Lucy — Mississauga</p> <p>with 29 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.</p> <p>God bless your days ...!!</p>	<p>Rotterdam, Grand Rapids, the Neth. Mich.</p> <p>1951 February 1 1991</p> <p>In celebration of the anniversary of both wedding and ordination into the ministry, we congratulate</p> <p>GERARD and MARGARET BOUMA (nee Loos)</p> <p>who together have served the Lord in Holland, Canada and the U.S.A. We love you, Mom and Dad!</p> <p>Mieka & Tom Jelsema — Middleville, Mich.</p> <p>Tim, Derek, Jared, Casey Martin — Ann Arbor, Mich.</p> <p>Keith & Brenda Bouma — Amarillo, Texas</p> <p>Amy, Katie Joanne — Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>An open house was held at East Paris Chr. Ref. Church, Grand Rapids, Mich., on Feb. 2, 1991.</p> <p>Home address: 1747 Edgewood SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Anne and Aaltje Nauta (nee Hoogsteen) who will celebrate, D.V., their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 12, 1991.</i></p> <p>Beetgummolen, Woodstock, Friesland Ontario</p> <p>1951 February 22 1991</p> <p>"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).</p> <p>With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we hope to celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>HAROLD and TINA RADERSMA (nee Stienstra)</p> <p>We pray that our Lord will continue to bless them and keep them in his care.</p> <p>With love from your children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Frank & Tollina deWaard — Brantford, Ont.</p> <p>Carolyn, Jeremy, Andrew Harry & Juli Radersma — Mt. Pleasant, Ont.</p> <p>Jeffrey, Steven</p> <p>Gerry & Wilma Chaisson — Brantford, Ont.</p> <p>Crystal, Brandon</p> <p>Pardo & Renee Vulcano — Brantford, Ont.</p> <p>Jason, Michelina</p> <p>Jim & Joyce Buisman — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Michael, Alisha (Melissa and Kimberley, in heaven)</p> <p>Jim & Laurie Radersma — Brantford, Ont.</p> <p>Open house will be held on Feb. 23, 1991, from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church on Lansdowne Ave. in Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 111 John Davies Dr., Woodstock, ON N4T 1N2</p>	<p>Beetgummolen St. Catharines 1931 February 12 1991</p> <p>"May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you" (Ps. 33:22).</p> <p>With thankfulness to the Lord for all the years he has given them together, we would like to share with you our joy on the occasion of the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,</p> <p>ANNE (Andrew) and AALTJE (Alice) NAUTA (nee Hoogsteen)</p> <p>May the Lord continue to bless and keep them.</p> <p>Love and congratulations:</p> <p>Peter & Susan Nauta — Fenwick, Ont.</p> <p>Shirley & Gerrit Riewald — Cayuga, Ont.</p> <p>Leo & Yvonne Nauta — St. Catharines, Ont.</p> <p>Sam & Marie Nauta — St. Catharines, Ont.</p> <p>Janet & Dave Vandermolen — St. Catharines, Ont.</p> <p>Dorothy Duemo & Bill — Falkland, B.C.</p> <p>Ann & Klaas De Vries — Simcoe, Ont.</p> <p>Betty & Gary Galenkamp — Brantford, Ont.</p> <p>34 grandchildren and 43 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Open house: Feb. 16, 1991, from 1:30 to 3:30 in the Calvin Memorial Christian School, 300 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 5 White St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z1</p>
<p>Thanks</p> <p>BOSKER:</p> <p>With thankful hearts to God, Herman and Marry Bosker wish to say "Thank You" to their children and grandchild, relatives and friends for the prayers, presents, flowers and cards received, and for the wonderful evening of celebration on their 25th wedding anniversary.</p>	<p>MARRIAGES</p> <p>JONKHEER-VANDER PLOEG:</p> <p>With God's blessing,</p> <p>MISS JENNIFER W. JONKHEER and MR. EDWARD VANDER PLOEG</p> <p>plan to marry on Saturday, Feb. 23, 1991, at 3 p.m. at the Alliance Church in Owen Sound, Ont., with Rev. Gehrels of Collingwood CRC officiating.</p> <p>Wedding text: Ruth 1:16b.</p> <p>The couple will reside at: R.R.#1, Cargill, ON N0G 1J0; (519) 366-2402</p> <p>VAN DEN BERG-VUYK:</p> <p>The children of</p> <p>MARTIN VUYK</p> <p>invite family and friends to an open house to celebrate the marriage of their father to</p> <p>TINEKE VAN DEN BERG</p> <p>They were married on Feb. 6, 1991, in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The open house will be held at the Ancaster Chr. Ref. Church on Friday, Feb. 22, 1991, from 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.</p> <p>Home address: 15 Marlow Dr., Hamilton, ON L9C 2H5</p>	<p>Onstwedde, Gr. Mill Bay, B.C.</p> <p>1951 February 19 1991</p> <p>KLAAS and ANNA SIEBRING (nee Huisman)</p> <p>"Lord, you have been, are, and will be our dwelling place" (Ps. 90:1).</p> <p>Joy & Clayton (Wierenga) — Neerlandia, Alta.</p> <p>Amanda, Julian, Caleb, Joseph, Greta</p> <p>Harmina & Tony (Jansen) — Surrey, B.C.</p> <p>Sharlene, Anthony, Joel, Lindsay, Zachary, Jonathan, Ashley, Justin</p> <p>Jenny & Dennis (de Groot) — Langley, B.C.</p> <p>Rueben, Joshua, Asher, Gabriel Grace — Neerlandia, Alta.</p> <p>Liz & Tim (Tolkamp) — Langley, B.C.</p> <p>Elna — New Westminster, B.C.</p> <p>Anita — Richmond, B.C.</p> <p>Albert & Ruth (Jager) — Mill Bay, B.C.</p> <p>Breanna</p> <p>Kathleen & Mike (Ewald) — Grimshaw, Alta.</p> <p>Nicholas</p> <p>Angela — Abbotsford, B.C.</p> <p>Heidi — Sioux Centre, Iowa</p> <p>Home address: 780 Kilmalu Rd., Mill Bay, BC V0R 2P0; (604) 743-2074</p>	<p>Help Wanted</p>	<p>Help Wanted</p>
<p>Birthday</p> <p>VANDERHAM:</p> <p>With gratitude to God, we congratulate our father, grandfather and great-grandfather,</p> <p>JORIS VANDERHAM</p> <p>on his 80th birthday on Feb. 11, 1991.</p> <p>With love from your family.</p> <p>Home address: Holland Christian Homes, Hope Towers, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Apt. 712, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>For Rent</p> <p>For rent: three-bedroom home in Fenwick on large lot on Welland Rd., city services. \$800 per month plus utilities. First and last required, available March 15. References. Please call (416) 892-2377.</p> <p>For rent: three-bedroom home close to downtown Fonthill. \$750 per month plus utilities. First and last required, available March 1. References. Call (416) 892-2377.</p> <p>House for rent in Hamilton, Mountainbrow and Upper Ottawa. Quiet area, large three-bedroom, carport, rec. room, central air, all appliances. Available March 1. \$975 a month. Call (416) 648-5280 or (416) 574-6166.</p>	<p>Andyk Woodstock 1951 March 1 1991</p> <p>With thankfulness and praise to the Lord, we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>GEORGE and TINA VANDERVECHT (nee Harlaar)</p> <p>We trust that the Lord will continue to hold you both in the palm of his hand.</p> <p>An open house is planned on March 2, 1991, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, 410 Lansdowne St., Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Best wishes only, please.</p> <p>Their thankful children:</p> <p>Peter & Nancy — Embro, Ont.</p> <p>Nikki, Amanda, Stephanie, Paul, Nathan</p> <p>Homer & Sue — Stayner, Ont.</p> <p>Michelle, Steve, David, Jennifer Netty & John Zeyl — Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Jessica, Denise, Matthew, Eric Dianne & Rudy Fluit — Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>Samantha, Cynthia, Benjamin Wilfred & Margaret — Embro, Ont.</p> <p>Jamie, Jason, Daryl</p> <p>Margaret & John Thompson (fiance) — Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>Gary — Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Joe — Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 235 Victoria St. N., Woodstock, ON N4S 6W2</p> <p>Obituaries on next page ...</p>	<p>The Council of the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, St. Catharines, Ont., Canada</p> <p>is seeking a</p> <p>Second Pastor to work in a Team Ministry.</p> <p>This would involve all aspects of ministry. The Search Committee would be pleased to receive inquiries from pastors who would like to be considered. A church profile is available. Please send your correspondence to:</p> <p>Mrs. Lucy Wiersma Maranatha CRC 301 Scott St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1J4</p>	
<p>Employment wanted</p> <p>Female would like to work on dairy or farrow-to-finish farm operation, preferably in Ontario. Has experience through summer jobs in that field of work and ABM-diploma from Centuria College. Please call (519) 335-3247.</p>				

Classified

Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Teachers	Teachers
<p>John 14:1-7. On Sunday, Jan. 20, 1991, it pleased the Lord to take unto himself our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,</p> <p>JOHANNA EVERDINA DUENK beloved wife of the late Gerrit Jan Duenk. Caring mother of: Jan Duenk Riek & Harry Klinker Anne & Gary Martin Dear grandmother of: Jack, Evelyn, Gerry, Annette, Lisa, Lynn and Amie Dear great-grandmother of: Andrea, Ashley, Laura, Kristofer, Shawna, Heather and Dirk The funeral was held on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 1991, at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Acton, Ont. Rev. Paul Stadt officiated. Home address: R.R.#4, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S7</p> <p>On Jan. 12, 1991, our Lord suddenly called home, by way of a tragic accident, our dear family member,</p> <p>HELEN EUVERMAN at the age of 50 years. She was an example to us all. We pray that the Lord will give her husband, Fred, and the family much strength. John 3:16. The Euverman family. Fred's home address: P.O. Box 2884, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0</p> <p>Psalms 121. On Jan. 20, 1991, the Lord took to himself our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather,</p> <p>JAN SMID at the age of 89 years in Edmonton, Alta. Pake was predeceased by his wife Roelofje in March, 1986. They were married for 59 years and for many years lived in Carrot Creek, Alta., and Richmond, B.C. Lovingly remembered by his four sons: Frank & his wife Tina — Richmond, B.C. George & his wife Ria — Edmonton, Alta. Sidney & his wife Carrie — Winnipeg, Man. Herman — Richmond, B.C. His three daughters: Grace & her husband Ted — Edson, Alta. Audrey & her husband Ray — Edmonton, Alta. Hennie & her husband Don — Rimby, Alta. 24 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren. Two brothers in Winnipeg, Man., and three brothers in the Neth. Predeceased by one sister and two brothers in the Neth. A memorial service was held in Edmonton on Thursday, Jan. 24, 1991, Rev. Nick Cornelisse officiating. A funeral service was held in the Chr. Ref. Church, Richmond, B.C., Rev. John Ooms officiating. Interment in the Valley View Memorial Gardens in Surrey, B.C. Correspondence address: George Smid, 10919-36 St., Edmonton, AB T5W 2A6</p>	<p>"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15). The Lord has called home, on Jan. 25, 1991, our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,</p> <p>MARGARETHA HEIDA (nee Veldstra) in her 80th year. Predeceased by her loving husband Ted in 1988. Beloved mother of: Clarence & Trix Heida — Mitchell, Ont. Yitty & Fred Leenstra — Smithville, Ont. Jim & Elsie Heida — Jordan Station, Ont. Tina & Clarence De Groot — Kingston, Ont. Jack & Hennie Heida — Fenwick, Ont. Richard & Jean Heida — Vineland, Ont. Bonnie & Peter Buma — Fruitland, Ont. Theodore & Lucy Heida — Aurora, Ont. Susan & Brian Pearce — Winona, Ont. Sally & Fred Cutting — Ancaster, Ont. Bob & Jane Heida — Wainfleet, Ont. Margaret & Henning Bruchmann — Thorold, Ont. Beloved grandmother of 37 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. Correspondence address: F. Leenstra, R.R.#3, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0</p> <p>Zevenhuizen (Gr.) Vineland, the Neth. Ont., Can. June 26, 1932 Jan. 20, 1991 After a brief illness the Lord called to his heavenly home, our dearly loved husband, father and opa,</p> <p>ALDERT LOUWES Lovingly remembered by his dear wife Ada Louwes (nee Bergman). Children and grandchildren: Margaret Louwes — Winnipeg, Man. William & Jackie Louwes — Port Colborne, Ont. Sarah Patricia & Gerald VanBaalen — Wainfleet, Ont. Philip, Samara, Paul Joanne & John Hanemaayer — St. Catharines, Ont. Steve Louwes — Vineland, Ont. Survived by his mother Antje Louwes (nee Vandervliet), brother Ate Louwes, and sister Antje VanderBaan, all of the Netherlands. He was predeceased by his father Willem, and his brothers, Wiebe and Wietse. The funeral took place at Maranatha Ref. Church in Wainfleet, Ont., on Jan. 24, 1991, with Rev. W. Stoepker officiating. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:31-39). Correspondence address: P.O. Box 120, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0</p>	<p>"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). On Jan. 9, 1991, the Lord took unto himself my dearly beloved wife, our loving mother, step-mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,</p> <p>GRACE NIEZEN (nee Slot) at the age of 68. Beloved wife of Abram Niezen and the late William Balder. Dear mother of: Nellie & Tom Scholman — Beamsville Gerda & Ron Kresky — Stratford Henry & Maureen Balder — Brockville Katie & Albert Karsten — Hamilton Dear step-mother of: Arie & Reina Niezen — Orangeville Nellie & Russ Farrell — Barrie Bert & Diane Niezen — Fergus Loving grandmother of 26 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Memorial service was held at Mountainview Chr. Ref. Church, Grimsby, Ont., on Jan. 12, 1991. Correspondence address: Mr. A. Niezen, 133A Main St. W., Grimsby, ON L3M 1S1</p>	<p>LACOMBE, ALTA.: Lacombe Christian School, approximately 330 students in K-8, located in Central Alberta, invites applications from teachers for September 1991. There is an opening in Kindergarten and in the primary grades and, due to expansion, an opening in the upper elementary grades. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Send resume to Wernart van Deventer, Principal, Lacombe Christian School, P.O. Box 1749, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0. Phone: (403) 782-6531.</p> <p>NEWMARKET, Ont.: The Holland Marsh District Chr. School invites applications for a primary teaching position for 1991/92, due to the blessing of increased enrolment. Please send inquiries or applications to: Mrs. C. Bootsma, Principal, HMDCS, R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9. Tel: (416) 775-3701.</p> <p>SMITHERS, B.C.: Bulkley Valley Chr. High School of Smithers, B.C., will be in need of a Principal in September 1991. Please send applications with resume to: Mr. G. Ewald, Box 2117, Smithers, BC V0G 2N0</p>	<p>VERNON, B.C.: Vernon Christian School, located in the beautiful Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, is a quickly growing interdenominational school offering educational programs for students in kindergarten to Grade 8. There will be a half-time kindergarten teaching position available and an opening in the primary level (Grade 2/3) for the 1991-1992 school year. Those interested in acquiring these or any other teaching positions are encouraged to direct inquiries and/or send letters of application to: Elco Vandergrift, R.R.#3, Site 19A, Comp. 4, Vernon, BC V1T 6L6. Phone: (604) 545-7345.</p> <p>VANCOUVER, B.C.: Vancouver Christian School, a denominationally diverse community, currently offering Kindergarten through Grade 7, is planning to expand to junior high school beginning with Grade 8 in the 1991/92 school year. Persons with a strong Math/Science background in education with interest in teaching P.E., Art or Computer, are invited to apply. Please direct enquiries to: Ellen Visser, Junior High Program Coordinator, Vancouver Christian School, 3496 Mons Dr., Vancouver, BC V5M 3E6</p> <p>WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Christian School, Woodstock, Ont., will have an opening in the intermediate grade level for the 1991/92 school year. Strengths in the areas of science, French and/or music would be an asset. Please send your inquiries and/or resume to: Mr. Henry Tuininga, Principal, John Knox Christian School, P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8. Tel.: (519) 539-1492.</p>
		<p>Real Estate Bi-level semi-dwelling St. Catharines, Ont. \$126,900 An affordable new home for you! Brick and vinyl bi-level, series 800 doors, large eat-in kitchen, oak cabinets and railings, side entrance into lower level, fully landscaped, and many more features. Don't pass this by! To inspect and purchase, call G.W. Abrahams Realty Ltd., broker - Linda Lammers, Sales Representative (416) 688-0037 or (416) 688-2422, pager 130.</p>	<p>Miscellaneous Church News Christian Reformed Church Address change Rev. Cecil VanNijenhuis, 120 Upper Canada Dr., Kitchener, ON N2P 1E5.</p>	
		<p>Teachers AGASSIZ, B.C.: Agassiz Christian School invites applications for the following positions: 1 primary/intermediate position (50% kindergarten/50% administration relief including French) 1 intermediate position (combined Grade 4/5). Interested applicants, please send resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. Rick Esselink, Principal, Agassiz Christian School, Box 323, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0. Phone: (604) 796-9310 (school); (604) 796-3209 (home); fax: (604) 796-2952.</p> <p>COBOURG, Ont.: Northumberland Chr. School has an opening in the primary grades for a full-time teacher who has a background in music. Please call Henry Lise, Principal, at (416) 372-8766 or write: Northumberland Chr. School, R.R.#5, Cobourg, ON K9A 4J8</p> <p>FRUITLAND, Ont.: John Knox Memorial Christian School seeks applicants for two possible positions for the 1991-92 school year: a part-time kindergarten teacher and a full-time primary/junior teacher. Please contact: Mr. Julius De Jager, Principal, at (416) 643-2460 or write to 795 Hwy. #8, Fruitland, ON L0R 1L0 for application forms.</p> <p>KINGSTON: Kingston Christian School has an opening at the Kindergarten level for the 1991-92 school year. If you would like to become part of a dedicated team of Christian educators in a new facility for a multi-denominational school, please send application and resume to: Kingston Christian School, R.R.#3, 1212 Woodbine Rd., Kingston, ON K7L 4V2. Attention: H. Pott. Salaries as per OCSTA/OACS salary guidelines.</p>		
<p>Help Wanted FULL-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR First CRC of Calgary, Alta., is expanding its ministry and is seeking a youth director who will provide guidance and challenging Christian programs for our youth. Preference will be given to individuals with post secondary education (ordained/unordained). You are encouraged to contact Ruth Krabbe, 3211 Canmore Rd., N.W., Calgary, AB T2M 4J8; (403) 282-5003.</p>	<p>Help Wanted Greenhouse Work: Full-time, year round. Some experience or horticultural training required. Benefits after 3 months. Apply now to: Creekside Gardens Limited, 4397 Fairlane Rd., Jordan Station, Ont.; (416) 562-4126.</p>			
	<p>Teachers CLINTON, Ont.: Clinton and District Chr. School will have a vacancy starting Sept. 1991. Grade level to be determined. If you are interested in a teaching position with our school, please send your application and resume to: Mr. R. Schuurman, Principal, Clinton and District Christian School, P.O. Box 658, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0. Tel. (519) 482-7851.</p>			

Classified

Teachers



WILLOWDALE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

TEACHING POSITION

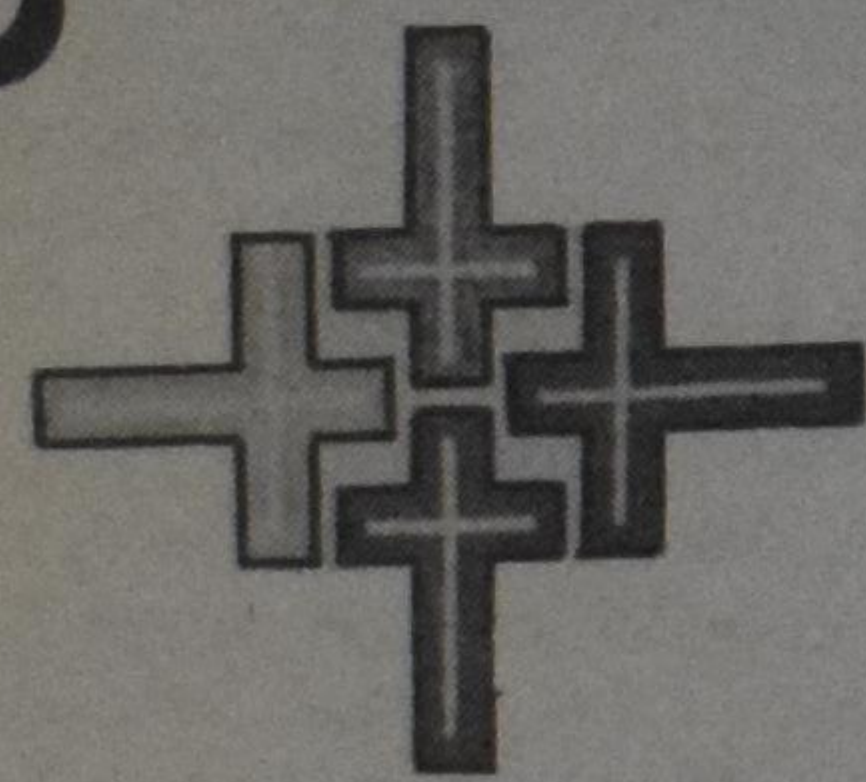
Willowdale Christian School invites applications for vacancies at the

JUNIOR or INTERMEDIATE level

for 1991-1992

Interested persons should send resume to:

Rick Nonnekes, Principal
Willowdale Christian School
60 Hilda Ave., North York, ON M2M 1V5
or call:
(416) 222-1711 or (416) 222-1939



Edmonton Christian Schools

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TEACHERS: Applications are invited from interested individuals for teaching positions with the Edmonton Christian Schools. The Edmonton Christian School system is a progressive school system operating three elementary junior high schools and one senior high school. Applications are being accepted for all positions. The Edmonton Christian Schools provide a good salary and benefit package with ample opportunity for professional development, growth and advancement.

ADMINISTRATORS: Educators interested in administrative positions are invited to inquire about possible openings. The Edmonton Christian Schools are dynamic schools allowing opportunity for interested educators to advance into administrative positions.

For applications or further inquiries contact:

Mr. P.C. Prinsen
North Edmonton Christian School
13470 Fort Rd., Edmonton, AB T5A 1C5
Phone: (403) 475-2818; Fax: (403) 478-1728

Toronto District Christian High School

T.D.C.H., a progressive Christian Secondary School on the outskirts of Toronto, invites applications from enthusiastic teachers in the following subject areas:

- History • Music • Biblical Studies • English and
- Computer Studies

Please send resumes to the school principal,

W. Barneveld
377 Woodbridge Ave., Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8

Listowel Christian School

Listowel, Ont.

invites applications for the position of

Teaching Principal

for the 1991/92 school year.

We are seeking a leader with a commitment to Jesus Christ for an interdenominational, K-8, school with 150 students.

The applicant should have an enthusiasm for the vision of Christian education and an ability to lead our school community in that vision.

He/she must demonstrate a love for children, be goal-oriented, and be a team player.

Those with varying levels of administrative experience will be considered.

Please forward your resume before Feb. 15, 1991, to:

Randy Jolliffe
425 Boyne Ave., Listowel, ON N4W 3K5
Phone: (519) 291-1786

Belleville & District Christian School

Belleville, Ont.,

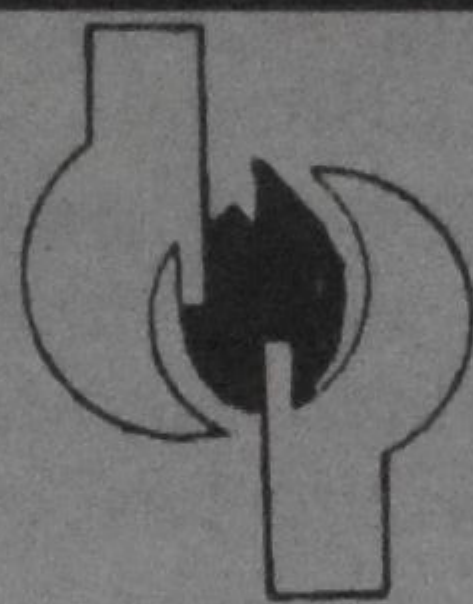
will be in need of a

PRINCIPAL

in September 1991.

Please send application with resume to:

Mr. Joe Bouma
c/o Belleville & District Christian School
R.R.#5, Belleville, ON K8N 4Z5



Covenant Christian School Leduc, Alberta

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

Our growing and dynamic school needs an administrator for the 1991-92 school year. Covenant serves 160 students in P through 9. This position combines a .7 administrative time allotment with a .3 teaching assignment.

Covenant also invites applications for teaching positions at all levels. Definite openings due to growth will occur in the middle elementary and junior high grades.

Direct inquiries and applications to:

Lloyd Den Boer, Principal
Covenant Christian School
Box 3827, Leduc, AB T9E 6M7

Help Wanted

Community Church, in co-operation with Salem Christian Mental Health Association

invites applications for the position of
full-time community worker

The job involves co-ordinating and facilitating support services for the families, seniors and disabled residents of our new 214-unit apartment complex. Qualifications: BSW, community worker diploma or equivalent education or work experience in community organizational/social services field.

Send resume by March 15 to:

Community Christian Reformed Church
of Richmond Hill (Toronto area)
c/o The Meeting Place, 10620 Yonge St.
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 3C8
(416) 884-3005
Attention: Pastor Bill Geerts

DORDT COLLEGE

Faculty Opportunities

Dordt College has tenure-track openings for the 1991-92 academic year in the following fields:

ECONOMICS: Responsibilities include teaching introductory and upper-level courses and participating in a business seminar. A doctorate in economics or business is preferred, but a doctorate near completion will be considered.

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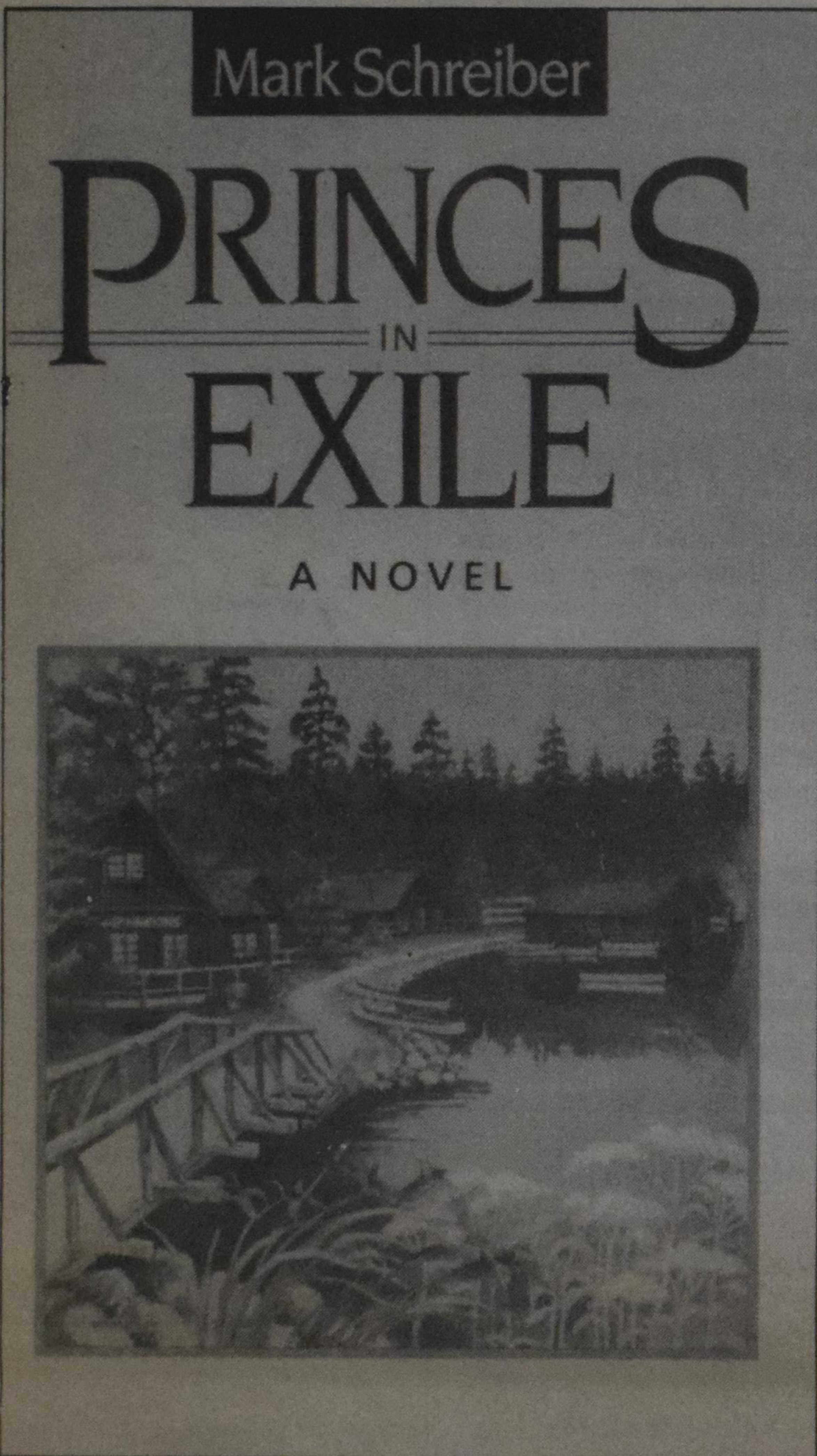
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Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Fiction

Novel of courage and love



Princes In Exile, Mark Schreiber. Toronto: General Publishing Co. Ltd., 1990. ISBN 0-7736-7281-8. Softcover, 222 pp., \$5.95. Reviewed by Doro J. Bakker, Orangeville, Ont.

Seventeen-year-old Ryan has brain cancer. He feels life has cheated him. He is angry and bitter. He's certain he won't live long enough to realize his greatest goal — becoming a doctor. Ever since he could remember, Ryan dreamed of

working in medicine. He knew he had a sharp mind and studying came easily to him.

Even before his diagnosis, Ryan visited hospitals whenever the opportunity arose. He was as conversant with medical jargon as his peers were with current rock stars. A brilliant mind and a promising doctor gone to waste! All Ryan sees is cancer. "Cancer — it is in my head and thoughts and every moment of my day. It is in the woods and flowers and tall grass. I cannot get away

from it."

But three weeks at Camp Hawkins changes all that. A special place for cancer patients in remission, Camp Hawkins allows Ryan and his bunkmates to be normal teenagers. Canoeing expeditions, overnight campouts, competitions, girlfriends, pranks and camaraderie are the stuff that make up any summer camp. Camp Hawkins is no exception. Here kids have a chance to get away from hurting families, probing doctors and peering passers-by. Here bald heads and prostheses are the norm.

'Cured'

Written from Ryan's point of view, *Princes in Exile* chronicles the three weeks Ryan spends at Camp Hawkins. We meet his bunkmates, the camp director, the doctor — all who have their own crosses to bear and hurdles to conquer. Each touches Ryan in a special way and helps him grow. Ryan leaves the camp a cured individual — not from brain cancer, but from the bitterness and anger that ate away at him and imprisoned him.

Princes in Exile is a compelling story of courage and insight. From its opening sentences right through to the last word, *Princes in Exile* held my attention. Although each cancer patient's story is unique, all of these children must squarely face the painful reality of death. I'm sure this story will live with me long after I have put away the book.

Princes in Exile has been made into a film and was aired as a "Sunday Night Movie" on CBC on November of last year. It will no doubt appear again in the future. Canadian screenwriter Joe Wiesenfeld, best known for his adaptation of "Anne of Green Gables," wrote the screenplay.



Friends of God

Reproach

"We are objects of reproach to our neighbours, of scorn and derision to those around us" (Psalm 79:4).

Dr. James Dobson once told a story about his son when he was just a little fellow. Ryan had a knack for getting into trouble. If there was something to break, chances are he'd smash it. If there was something to get into, he was like a weasel. If there was something to mess up, he was the devil's whirlwind.

After a while, the Dobsons got rather exasperated. Shirley Dobson would shake her head and say to her husband, "Somebody better do something about that boy!"

One day they were working around the house, and suddenly they both had this same feeling of uneasiness. They looked around for Ryan but they couldn't find him! And that's when they got scared; what had he gotten himself into now?

Finally Dobson looked out the kitchen window. There was Ryan. Somehow he'd climbed onto the back of a big truck that was parked out on the street. Before he knew it, he'd managed to get high enough to scare himself. And then, when he tried to find his way down, his shirt got caught. And there he was, swaying back and forth, hanging from the rear of the truck.

Dr. Dobson was in a bit of a panic. He wasn't quite sure how to rush out and help Ryan. He was afraid that if he shouted at Ryan, or ran up to him suddenly, the boy might be startled and fall to the pavement and hurt himself. So very quietly but quickly, he sneaked up to Ryan from the side of the truck. And he thought it as a little strange that Ryan wasn't crying or calling out for help. But when Dobson got closer, he heard his son muttering something very emphatically to himself: "Somebody better do something about that boy! Somebody better do something about that boy!"

Messing with fire

If you can see that picture in your mind, then you've got a good feeling for the background behind Psalm 79. Like a boy who's been playing where he shouldn't, the nation of Israel was messing around with fire. And like a person who's pushed her luck just a little too far, the Israelites were hung up on a situation they couldn't escape. And like the child in each of us, the only thought they had was: "Somebody better do something about that boy!"

Power politics was the name of the game in Israel's world. It wasn't much different from today, actually. First the Assyrians, legendary for their cruelty, swept through the ancient Near East with their armies. More recently it was the Babylonians who conquered and ruled. Today, the territory of both kingdoms falls largely within the boundaries of Iraq!

In any case, the Israelites had made a number of stupid political alliances and now they paid the price: Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple was a wasted pile of rubble, and death reeked in the littered streets. The survivors walked through the dust in a daze and the captives who had been stolen away as slaves gave up hope.

Hide-and-seek

But the Israelites were really beyond prayer, in a sense. For these were people who had lost their religion. For a long time now they'd pretended that God didn't exist, that he didn't really have a place in their world. And so, when they needed him most, they couldn't find him.

That's the tragedy of Psalm 79. That's why the reproach hangs over the land. And there, swinging on the hook of judgment, sways little Israel. One can almost hear the mutter: "Somebody better do something about that boy!"

And here's grace. Somehow, in the end of the matter, Asaph knows that God won't let them hang there forever. That's why even the cry, "Somebody better do something about that boy!" is more of a testimony of hope than the anguish of despair. For one day, Somebody did take Israel off the hook. Even if he got himself caught up there in the process.

Wayne Brauer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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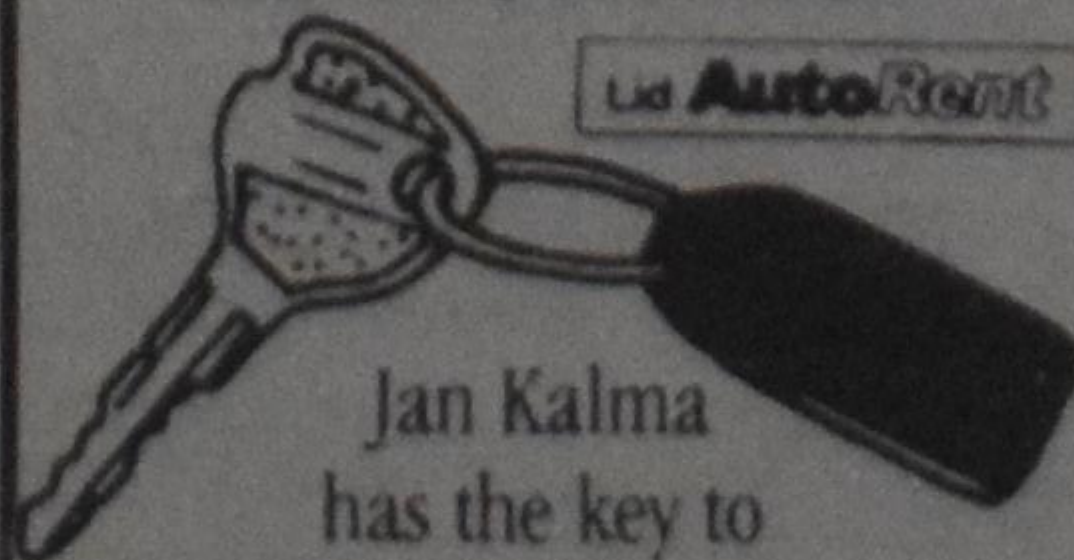
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